



**This electronic thesis or dissertation has been
downloaded from Explore Bristol Research,
<http://research-information.bristol.ac.uk>**

Author:

Lo, Pak Cheun

Title:

**Effects of online audio-book resources on library usage and reading preferences and
practices of young learners in an elementary school library setting in Hong Kong**

General rights

Access to the thesis is subject to the Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International Public License. A copy of this may be found at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>. This license sets out your rights and the restrictions that apply to your access to the thesis so it is important you read this before proceeding.

Take down policy

Some pages of this thesis may have been removed for copyright restrictions prior to having it been deposited in Explore Bristol Research. However, if you have discovered material within the thesis that you consider to be unlawful e.g. breaches of copyright (either yours or that of a third party) or any other law, including but not limited to those relating to patent, trademark, confidentiality, data protection, obscenity, defamation, libel, then please contact collections-metadata@bristol.ac.uk and include the following information in your message:

- Your contact details
- Bibliographic details for the item, including a URL
- An outline nature of the complaint

Your claim will be investigated and, where appropriate, the item in question will be removed from public view as soon as possible.

**Effects of Online Audio-Book Resources on Library Usage
and Reading Preferences and Practices of Young Learners
in an Elementary School Library Setting in Hong Kong**

by

Patrick LO (Pak Cheung)

B.F.A. Mount Allison University, 1992

M.L.I.S. McGill University, 1994

M.A. Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2004

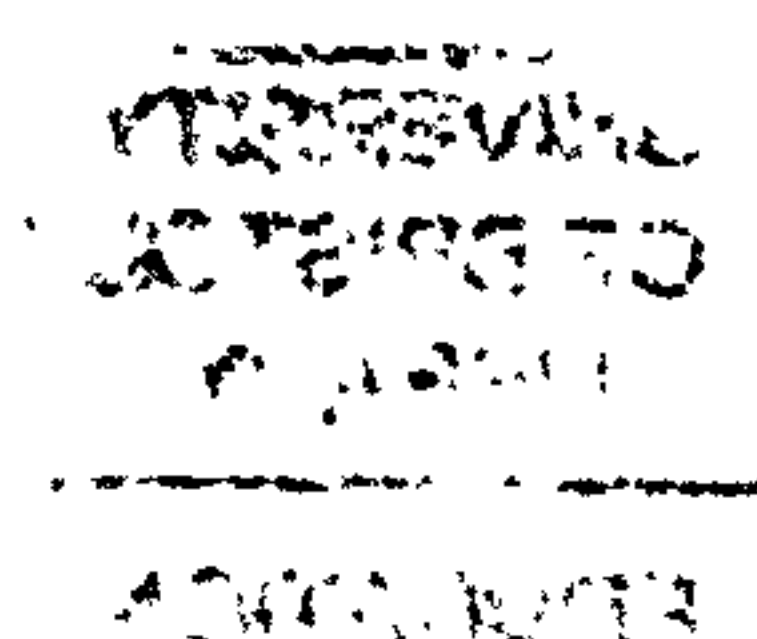
Student Number: 50981819

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Education (Part-Time)
in the Graduate School of Education
at the University of Bristol
Bristol, U.K.

Spring 2009

Dissertation Supervisors:
Professor Susan Robertson and Professor Fiona Steele

47,874 words



DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The thesis has not been presented to any other University for examination in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed:  _____
Patrick LO (Pak Cheung)

Date: 1st April, 2009



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study is to measure and assess the potentials and effects of online audio-book resources in fostering young children's motivation to read. The research study involved two groups of 5th- and 6th-grade elementary-school students in Hong Kong – measuring their reading motivation, and learning from an online audio-book resource, **Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL)** in the context of a school-library setting in Hong Kong. A total number of 292 participants (students from two different international elementary schools (Bradbury and Kingston International Elementary School) in Hong Kong were invited to take part in this study. Students' library usage, reading habits, and their attitudes and ratings on the chosen audio-book resource were recorded, measured and evaluated through the use of a set of self-completed questionnaires. The data sources included questionnaire surveys on students, classroom teachers, school-library staff, and parents, as well as focus group interviews on NSWL student users.

The duration of this research study was five months, whilst data collection was conducted between October 2006 and March 2007. The major findings were that out of all 260 respondents, 52% indicated they had used NSWL. Amongst these 136 NSWL users: 33.3% said "Yes", they did enjoy using NSWL; 37.2% said they "Sometimes" enjoyed it; while only 29.5% said they did not enjoy using this online audio resource as they thought its contents not interesting. The chosen online audio resource seemed to have very little influence in enhancing the students' reading motivation in general. In fact, the school librarians witnessed a decrease (10.4 percentage points) in the number of students who visited the school library on a daily basis, and a small decline in the number of students using the school library for "fun". In other words, the availability of audio-books is not necessarily a motivator to read, or to read more amongst the student population under study. Other data collected from the questionnaires and focus groups also indicated girls were more likely than boys to regularly and voluntarily visit and borrow books from the school library, to use the school library for fun, to enjoy reading poetry, and to use NSWL. In order to appeal to a wider audience and enhance motivation to read, the content of audio-books will need to be expanded to include more genres and more diverse content.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the Bradbury Elementary School, the Kingston Elementary School, and the children who kindly agreed to participate in this research study. The author gratefully acknowledges the cooperation and openness the teachers and students displayed towards my research effort.

Special thanks to the two school librarians, Mr. Christopher Chan (*Librarian, Bradbury Elementary School*) and Ms. Gabriella Chiu (*Librarian, Kingston Elementary School*) who helped in the design of the different questionnaires, as well as in the collection of data, and the implementation of a series of reading incentive programmes to support and supplement of this research study.

Thanks are also due to the Naxos Digital Services, Ltd., who generously sponsored a number of CD gifts/souvenirs for supporting a series of reading incentive programmes implemented at the two school libraries as part of this research study.

A hearty thanks must go to my supervisors, Professor Susan Robertson and Professor Fiona Steele, who both provided me with continuous encouragement and advice throughout the long process towards the completion of this research study.

This dissertation is dedicated with loving appreciation to my parents. Without their constant support and unwavering belief in my abilities, this research project would never have been attempted.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support of all the people mentioned above.

Patrick LO (Pak Cheung)

April, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Appendices	viii
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures.....	x
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1. Introduction and aims of research	1
1.2. Research questions and purpose of the study	5
1.3. Significance of research – originality and values	5
1.4. Definitions of terms	6
1.5. Outline of the Study.....	9
1.6. Conclusion to Chapter 1	9
Chapter 2. Libraries, Young Learners, Reading Practices and New Technologies.....	10
2.1. Introduction	10
2.2. Elementary-school students’ reading practices and motivation	10
2.2.1. Reading motivation and its relations to literacy development	12
▪ Motivation	12
▪ Voluntary reading	13
▪ Reading engagement	14
2.3. Connections between school libraries and elementary-school students’ reading practices	14
2.3.1. Role of school library and its impacts on student learning and reading	16
2.3.2. Digital technologies and impacts of school-library services	16
2.3.3. Making school library an ‘exciting’ place for children	17
2.4. Relations between ICT and elementary-school students’ reading motivation	18
2.5. The need and trend for multi-literacy/multimodal education and the multimodal nature of young children’s literacy learning.....	21
2.6. Potentials of online audio-books – a summary.....	25
2.7. Conclusion to Chapter 2	28
Chapter 3. Research Methodologies and Instruments.....	30
3.1. Introduction	30
3.2. Research design and nature of data collection	30
3.3. Study population – the chosen schools and their students	31
3.3.1. Homepages of the selected schools	31
3.3.2. ‘Tween’ – characteristics of study population	32
3.4. Research instruments	32
3.4.1. Online resource chosen for research - Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL)	33
3.4.1.1. NSWL’s setup and its audio-book recordings	33
3.4.1.2. NSWL’s contents.	34
3.4.1.3. NSWL’s user interface/navigation, setup, functionalities.....	34
3.4.2. Self-completed questionnaires for students (Pre-Questionnaire and Post-Questionnaire)	36
▪ Pre-Questionnaire for students.....	37

▪ Post-Questionnaire for students.....	37
▪ General information on number of Pre- and Post-Questionnaire collected	38
3.4.3. NSWL monthly usage report	39
3.4.4. Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire.....	39
3.4.5. Parent Questionnaire	39
3.4.6. Student focus group interviews	40
3.5. Research schedule and data-collection procedures.....	41
3.6. NSWL-reading-inventive programmes	42
3.6.1. <i>NSWL Competition</i> at Bradbury School.....	43
3.6.2. Kingston Elementary School Library – NSWL Listening Worksheet	44
3.6.3. <i>NSWL Competition</i> and NSWL Listening Worksheet prize details.....	44
3.7. Criteria for measuring effectiveness.....	45
3.8. Parental supports.....	46
3.9. Validity and reliability of research data.....	46
3.9.1. Multiple methods/triangulation.....	46
3.9.2. Reliability and credibility.....	47
3.9.3. Sample size.....	47
3.9.4. Questionnaire surveys.....	48
3.9.5. Pre- and Post-Questionnaire pilot tests.....	48
3.9.6. Student focus group interviews.....	48
3.9.7. Chosen online audio resource (NSWL) and usage frequencies.....	48
3.9.8. Retention of original research data.....	49
3.10. Research limitations and other technical constraints.....	49
3.10.1. Study population and sample size.....	50
3.10.2. Questionnaire surveys on students.....	51
3.10.3. Student focus group interviews.....	51
3.10.4. Online audio-book resource selected for this study.....	52
3.10.5. Technical limitations and constraints concerning the chosen online audio resources.....	52
3.11. Code of ethical and professional conduct.....	53
3.12 Statement of Key Roles and Responsibilities.....	53
3.13. Conclusion to Chapter 3.....	55
 Chapter 4. Relationships between School Library and Reading Motivation – Analysis of Results from Student Questionnaire Surveys and Focus Group Interviews.....	 57
4.1. Introduction.....	57
4.2. Overall changes in students’ school-library usage, environment and reading practices before and after the introduction of NSWL.....	58
4.2.1. Overall changes in usage frequencies and nature of library visits amongst students.....	58
▪ School library as a place for ‘work’ versus ‘fun’.....	59
▪ Why students preferred asking friends rather than school librarians when having trouble finding information?	60
▪ Changes in frequencies amongst students borrowing books in spare time.....	61
4.2.2. Students’ ratings of school-library environment, instructions and services.....	63
▪ Changes in students’ ratings on overall school-library environment.....	64
▪ Changes in students’ library-information skills and relations to the library-lesson curricula....	65
▪ Students’ ratings on service attitudes of library staff.....	67
4.2.3. Changes in students’ reading practices.....	68
4.3. Gendered comparison on overall school-library usage and reading practices.....	70
4.3.1. Girls and boys involved in voluntary reading before and after introduction of NSWL.....	71
4.3.2. Gendered differences: understanding the nature versus nurture controversy.....	73
▪ Fiction versus non-fiction; girls’ preference for poetry.....	73
4.4. Further interrogating students’ reading practices and gendered differences: analysis of results from student interviews.....	74
▪ Factors related to amount and types of voluntary reading.....	75
▪ Home/Family learning environment and parental influences.....	77
▪ Access and availability of reading materials.....	78

▪ Gendered differences and reading preferences amongst students	79
▪ Boy's choices, boy's rejections and boy's boundaries.....	80
▪ Girls' choices and girls' boundaries.....	81
▪ Gendered assumptions of reading choices.....	83
▪ The fascination for comics amongst boys.....	84
4.5. Bringing data together: summary of results from questionnaire surveys and student interviews.....	86
▪ Chapter 4 – summary of findings.....	88
4.6. Conclusion to Chapter 4.....	90
 Chapter 5. Chosen Audio Resource: Analysis of Usage Results and User Experiences from Post-Questionnaire and Student Focus Group Interviews.....	 89
5.1. Introduction.....	91
5.2. NSWL's usage frequencies and patterns: analysis of results from NSWL software.....	92
5.2.1. Analysis of usage results from NSWL software.....	92
5.2.2. Teachers' and parents' views on NSWL's usage and applications.....	95
5.3. NSWL's content coverage and relevance of classics to children.....	95
5.4. NSWL usage and ratings: analysis of results from Post-Questionnaire.....	98
5.4.1. NSWL overall usage population.....	98
5.4.2. Home users versus school users.....	99
5.4.3. Self-selection versus selections from adults.....	100
5.4.4. Live storytelling.....	101
5.4.5. Average number of audio-books read.....	102
5.4.6. Students' experiences with NSWL.....	103
5.4.7. Reasons students 'enjoyed' using NSWL.....	104
5.4.8. Relevance of classics to children and their experiences of classics.....	105
5.4.9. Importance of illustrations for children literature.....	106
5.4.10. NSWL versus paper-books.....	107
5.4.11. Reasons why students preferred one over the other.....	108
5.4.12. NSWL's background music and sound effects.....	109
5.4.13. NSWL versus storytelling by live person.....	110
5.5. Gendered comparison: analysis of results from post-questionnaire on comparison between genders on different reading practices and relations to NSWL's usage.....	114
5.5.1. Gendered comparison on NSWL's usage patterns and preferences.....	114
5.5.2. Popular NSWL titles and relations to gendered preferences.....	115
5.6. NSWL usage and gendered differences: analysis of results from student interviews.....	117
5.6.1. NSWL for bedtime stories.....	117
5.6.2. Reading while listening versus just reading.....	119
5.6.3. 'Dramatization' and readers' imaginations.....	120
5.6.4. Reading expressions and speeds: effects on reading comprehension.....	122
5.6.5. Importance of a child-friendly interface and relevant children literature.....	122
5.6.6. Convenience of access via internet connectivity.....	124
5.6.7. NSWL versus paper-books: reading levels and comprehension.....	125
5.6.8. Students' suggestions for improvements on NSWL.....	126
5.6.9. "Boys' books" versus "girls' books"	127
5.7. Bringing Data Together: Summary of Results on NSWL.....	128
▪ Chapter 5 – summary of findings.....	130
5.8. Conclusion to Chapter 5.....	134
 Chapter 6. Overall Research Findings and Implications for Elementary Students' Reading Practices under the Digital Environment.....	 135
6.1. Introduction.....	135
6.2. Research Questions and Answers.....	136
6.3. Significance and Contributions of the Study.....	139
6.4. Review of Study and Reflections on Methodology.....	140

6.4.1. Methodological challenges and other technical constraints..... 141

- Questionnaire surveys on students..... 141
- Student focus group interviews..... 142
- Student population..... 142
- Duration of research..... 142
- Identifying/Defining factors that motivate students to read voluntarily..... 143
- Implementations of NSWL in classroom and school library..... 143

6.5. Implications of Research Findings..... 144

6.6. Conclusion to Chapter 6..... 148

Chapter 7. Final Conclusions and Recommendations 149

7.1. Recommendations for future researches..... 149

7.2. Recommendations for use of online audio-books..... 151

7.3. Final conclusion..... 155

References..... 157

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Bradbury and Kingston School Library special service category checklist.....	173
Appendix 2	Student Pre/Post-Questionnaire.....	174
Appendix 3	Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire.....	180
Appendix 4	Parent Questionnaire.....	183
Appendix 5	Responses from Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire on NSWL.....	186
Appendix 6	Responses from Parent Questionnaire on NSWL.....	191
Appendix 7 – Part A	Pre- and Post-Questionnaire survey – complete results from sections A to D - Question items 1 to 16	195
Appendix 7 – Part B	Student-Post-Questionnaire survey - complete results from section E online audio-books (NSWL) – question items 17 to 33.....	199
Appendix 8	Transcripts of student focus group interviews at Bradbury and Kingston Elementary School.....	207
Appendix 9	Information on <i>NSWL Reading Competition</i> (organized by Bradbury Elementary School Library).....	220
Appendix 10	NSWL Competition entry form - for first <i>NSWL Competition</i> at Bradbury Elementary School.....	219
Appendix 11	<i>NSWL Competition</i> entry form – for second <i>NSWL Competition</i>	220
Appendix 12	Bradbury Library e-newsletters to parents.....	222
Appendix 13	Bradbury Elementary School questionnaire for parents.....	229
Appendix 14	Kingston Elementary School Library e-newsletter.....	230
Appendix 15	Kingston Elementary School – NSWL Listening Worksheet for students.....	231
Appendix 16	Dumpscreens examples of NSWL’s user interface.....	232
Appendix 17	Author’s Biography	234
Appendix 18	Research and communication with other researchers, teachers and librarians, etc.....	236

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1.	Profiles of schools selected.....	31
Table 3.2.	NSWL - basic facts and content highlights.....	34
Table 3.3.	Student respondents and number of questionnaires collected.....	38
Table 3.4.	Student respondents and gender distribution.....	39
Table 3.5.	Radio between boy and girl respondents.....	39
Table 3.6.	Research schedule and data-collection procedures.....	41
Table 4.1.	How often do you visit school library?	59
Table 4.2.	What do you usually do if you are having trouble finding books or information?	60
Table 4.3.	How often do you borrow books from school library to read in your spare time at home?	62
Table 4.4.	Do you use library to study/do your homework/coursework in?	64
	How would you describe the library?	
Table 4.5.	Do you use library computer catalogue to find books in library?	66
	Do you use library computer catalogue without help?	
Table 4.6.	Are library staff helpful to you?	68
	Teachers and librarians:	
Table 4.7.	(What teachers and librarians thought their students' most-preferred choice of books)	70
	Parents:	
	(What parents thought their children's most-preferred choice of books)	70
Table 4.8.	Gendered Comparison: How often do you visit school library?.....	72
Table 4.9.	Gendered Comparison: Do you use library for fun?	72
Table 4.10.	Gendered Comparison: How often do you borrow books from school library to read in spare time at home?	72
Table 4.11.	Gendered Comparison: What kinds of books do you enjoy reading at home?.....	73
Table 4.12.	Chapter 4: Summary of findings.....	88
Table 5.1.	Bradbury School – NSWL monthly usage.....	93
Table 5.2.	Kingston School – NSWL monthly usage.....	94
Table 5.3.	NSWL's Content Statistics.....	96
Table 5.4.	Do you use NSWL in school library?.....	99
Table 5.5.	Do you use NSWL at home?.....	99
Table 5.6.	Do you prefer to listen to NSWL at the school library or at home?	100
Table 5.7.	Do you rely on your parents or teachers to choose what books to listen to from NSWL?	101
Table 5.8.	Do you prefer to choose your own books from NSWL?	101
Table 5.9.	Do your parents still read books to you at home?	102
Table 5.10.	Total # of NSWL titles listened within last 30 days.....	103
Table 5.11.	Do you enjoy listening to NSWL in your free time?	103
Table 5.12.	Do you think NSWL is easy to use?	104
Table 5.13.	Do you find text under NSWL more interesting and easier to follow than other printed books?	108
Table 5.14.	Reasons why students like and dislike NSWL - reasons why NSWL better than paper-books (NSWL advantages)	109
Table 5.15.	Reasons why students think paper-books better than NSWL..... (NSWL disadvantages).....	109
Table 5.16.	Do background music and sound effects in NSWL help you better understand & enjoy the stories or poems?	110
Table 5.17.	Live person versus NSWL – Do you preferred stories be told by a live person than NSWL?	110
Table 5.18.	Reasons why students preferred stories be told by live person than NSWL?.....	111
Table 5.19.	NSWL Users - Gender distributions.....	115
Table 5.20.	Which is your favourite audio-book inside NSWL?	116
Table 5.21.	Non-NSWL titles requested by users.....	126
Table 5.22.	Chapter 5: Summary of findings.....	130

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1. Screenshot Example A: Audio-Book Title *Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi from the Naxos Spoken Word Library..... 7

Figure 2.1. Screenshot Example B: Audio-Book Title *The Secret Garden* by Frances H. Burnett from Naxos Spoken Word Library..... 27

Figure 2.2. Screenshot Example C: Regular Electronic Book (without audio facility) entitled, *Learning to Write* by Gunther Kress from the NetLibrary..... 27

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction and Aims of Research

A universal goal of reading instruction should be fostering positive attitudes towards reading. My working assumption as a professional librarian is that library services and reading experiences are too good to miss. Following this assumption, it was my aim to explore the opportunities for reading and engagement in reading through new reading resources in school libraries. I believe that one of the primary roles of an elementary-school librarian is to cultivate an appetite for voluntary reading amongst the young students. Voluntary reading encompasses multiple types of reading which might be referred to as recreational, enrichment, personal, independent or leisure-time reading, and so on. All of these different types of reading practices depend on self-motivation and this, in turn, is a catalyst to, hopefully, generate beneficial outcomes:

“Independent, free, private person are all terms used in schools to describe the time teachers [or teacher-librarians] give to their pupils unguided reading. What all attributes have in common is an emphasis on the solitary nature of the reading process and the individual involvement of the learner. They are the visible signs of a rationale behind a reading model that emphasizes that children develop their reading skills by the act of reading and the best way to ensure individual’s growth is to provide adequate time to read books which engage their interests.”¹

Reading and listening are the integral components of the total literacy competency and a necessary prerequisite for functioning in society.² Each contributes different information to the reading process. People read in order to fulfill occupational, community, and social needs.³ Many children and adults also read simply for the pleasure of doing so. Many educators argue that good reading habits are essential for all elementary and secondary students in order for them to get the most out of their

¹ MILLARD, E. (1993) *Developing Readers in Middle Years*. Philadelphia: Open University Press, pp. 50.

² THIMMESCH, N. (1984) *Aliteracy: People Who can Read but Won't*. Washington, D.C: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

³ NELL, Victor. (1994) “The Insatiable Appetite.” in Eugene H. CRAMER and Marrietta CASTLES. (eds.) in *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain*. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann, pp. 41-52 ; ROSENTHAL, N. (1995) *Speaking of Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

adult life and that these habits become difficult to acquire if they are not learned at an early stage.

The preferred approach to teaching reading has been the subject of many changes, as many educators realize that no single method of reading instruction will succeed with all students. The result is that a variety of strategies have been developed and utilized to help students become competent readers. These strategies range from phonics to sign words; from programmed instruction to informal teaching (for example, open classroom⁴ and schools-without-walls programmes, and so on). Beyond the basics of letter and sound recognition, some educators place emphasis on phonics and/or word recognition, whilst other strategies designed to aid in these areas might include the use of phonics worksheets⁵ and flash cards.⁶

In most situations, students are encouraged to spend time reading aloud, and this practice is believed to aid them in becoming fluent readers.⁷ Electronic or online audio-books are referred to as computer-/online-based storybooks that allow the user to hear the words of the story read out loud by professional narrators or actors. Such technology offers the reader the option of acquiring information from a text, such as the pronunciation of words, definitions of difficult vocabulary, background information relevant to the topic, and the main idea of each paragraph. Audio-book software, then may be another tool that can be utilized to aid young students in their development of reading skills. This tool is made possible as a result of computer

⁴ **Open Classroom** – “open-classroom instructions focus on students’ learning by doing” resonated with those who believed that formal, or teacher-led classrooms are crushing students’ creativity”. Some open classrooms contained no whole-class lessons, no standardized tests, and no detailed curriculum. The best of the open classrooms had planned settings where children came in contact with things, books, and one another at “interest centers” and learned at their own pace with the help of the teacher. Teachers structured the classroom and activities for individual students and small work groups. They helped students negotiate each of the reading, mathematics, science, art, and other interest centers on the principle that children learn best when they are interested and see the importance of what they are doing. *Hoover Institution – Education Next – The Open Classroom*. Available at: <http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/3288371.html>

⁵ **Phonic Worksheet** – an educational tool designed to teach children phonic awareness or word recognition (that is, the relationship between written characters and their associated sounds) – facilitates the process for the child of looking at a word and being able to read it easily without hesitation. Phonic Worksheet online examples available at: <http://genkienglish.net/phonicsws.htm> ; http://worksheets.teach-nology.com/language_arts/phonics/

⁶ **Flash Cards** - reading/vocabulary flash cards are designed to provide young learners a fun, engaging way to acquire and practice the basic word recognition or phonic or reading skills preschool skills. Beginning with the concepts of colours and shapes, and progressing through letter recognition, sight words and phonics concepts, some language-learning flash cards also provide suggestions for fun games that will reinforce learning.

⁷ BRAXTON, Barbara. (2007) “Developing Your Reading-Aloud Skills.” *Teacher Librarian*, April, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 56-58 ; BRAXTON, Barbara. (2007) “Read-Alouds: Choosing the Right Book.” *Teacher Librarian*, February, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 52-53 ; CHURCH, Ellen Booth. (2007) “Reading Aloud-Artfully!” *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, January/February, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 5 ; O’CONNOR, Rollanda E., Annika WHITE, H. Lee SWANSON. (Fall, 2007) “Repeated Reading Versus Continuous Reading: Influences on Reading Fluency and Comprehension.” *Exceptional Children*, Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 31-46.

software which has the ability to deploy both visual and auditory effects, including highlighting the words as they are spoken. This process helps to show the reader the relationship between the spoken word and its written form. The computer software also has the capability to model voice fluctuation and expression as the written word is read aloud.⁸ In a classroom of over twenty students, with only one teacher, having the computer as a resource can be valuable to both teacher and student. As a result, a number of educational researches have commented that electronic and audio-books are particularly suited for enhancing the learning of the younger students in school as well as outside of the classroom⁹, and that recent technological developments have produced a new trend for different commercial vendors to provide such electronic materials for educational purposes.

Recently, many educational researches have suggested that online audio-book resources are one of the growth areas that could be important in drawing new young patrons to the public and school libraries.¹⁰ In addition, they allow children with different learning styles and abilities to enjoy the books that they might not otherwise experience. Research also suggests that some children simply prefer listening to reading, while others would listen to books, authors, and genres that they would never choose to read. And in some cases, those students who listened to an audio-book by an author whom they might not otherwise read, or concerning a subject about which their interest is slight, may also become interested in this author or subject, and make good use of the other printed resources as well.¹¹ Because of the presence of audio-books as a reading tool in school libraries, students might also be drawn into school

⁸ HUMBLE, Amy Leah. (2000) *A Comparison Study of the Traditional Reading Strategy of Reading Aloud with an Adult and the Technology Based Strategy of Computerized Talking Books*. [S.l.]: Dept. of Teacher Education, Johnson Bible College, pp. 13.

⁹ GRANT, Jamillah M. A. (2004) "Are Electronic Books Effective in Teaching Young Children Reading and Comprehension?" *International Journal of Instructional Media*, Summer, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 303 ; DE JONG, Maria and Adriana G. BUS. (2004) "The Efficacy of Electronic Books in Fostering Kindergarten Children's Emergent Story Understanding." *Reading Research Quarterly*, October, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 378-393 ; DE JONG, Maria. (March, 2002) "Quality of Book-Reading Matters for Emergent Readers: an Experiment with the Same Book in Regular or Electronic Format." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 94, No. 1, pp. 145-55 ; MAYNARD, May and Cliff MCKNIGHT. (2001) "Electronic Books for Children in UK Public Libraries." *The Electronic Library*. Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 405-424 ; FISCH, Shalom M. and Jennifer S. SHULMAN. (2001) "Reading Between the Pixels: Parents-Child Interaction While Reading Online Storybooks." Paper presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (Minneapolis, MN, 19th-22nd April, 2001).

¹⁰ ANDERSON-INMAN, Lynne. (1997) "Electronic Books for Secondary Students." *Journal of Adolescent: Adult Literacy*, March, Vol. 40, No. 6, 486-491 ; BARRON, Daniel E. (2001) "E-Everything and the School Library Media Specialist: Grist for the Mill." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, February, Vol. 17, No. 6 ; BEERS, Kylene Ed. (1998) *Into Focus: Understanding and Creating Middle School Readers*. Norwood, Mass.: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, pp. 510.

¹¹ ANDERSON-INMAN, Lynne. (1997) "Electronic Books for Secondary Students." *Journal of Adolescent: Adult Literacy*, March, Vol. 40, No. 6, pp. 486-491 ; BARRON, Daniel E. (2001) "E-Everything and the School Library Media Specialist: Grist for the Mill." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, February, Vol. 17, No. 6 ; BEERS, Kylene (eds.) (1998) *Into Focus: Understanding and Creating Middle School Readers*. Norwood, Mass.: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, pp. 510.

libraries when they otherwise have chosen not be there, and that they may well be inspired to make use of the more traditional library services as well. There were also cases suggesting that students who were usually not motivated to read have also become more open to listening to books because of the added values of the performance provided by the audio-books.¹² In other words, it is proposed that the presence of audio-book resources in school libraries has the potential to open the library doors to those segments of the student population who in the past seldom were users of the library services.

Despite the interest in audio-books which is gradually increasing amongst members of the general public who have begun to buy, rent, and borrow tapes from the public libraries, many school libraries are still resisting providing audio-book services as part of their normal service provision. Or if they do, it is at a level that is patently inadequate due to reasons such as the high cost of subscriptions in relation to low perceived demand. In addition, many parents and educators are still not aware of the advantages that modern computer audio-books have to offer. Many still think of audio-books as merely talking books: a service that was developed for the blind and the visually impaired so that they could enjoy hearing a book.

In this study, I aim to construct a user profile of elementary-school students: that is, to find out more about the elementary students' use of, and their attitudes towards their own school libraries in general, and to online audio-book resources provided to them in particular. By experimenting, and seeking answers to these sorts of questions, we as educators might have better tools to help build stronger connections between books, young people's reading behaviour, and literacy competency. This understanding, coupled with the characteristics of the young readers, might go some way towards helping the students remove the reading barriers to reading, to encourage the development of literacy skills and foster an engagement with the world of literature.

¹² MAXEY, Laurie.(2006) *Using Commercially Produced Audio Books to Improve Students' Reading Levels*. Available at: http://gse.gmu.edu/assets/docs/lmtip/vol2/L_Maxey.doc ; O'DAY, Pamela S. (2002) *Reading While Listening: Increasing Access to Print Through the Use of Audio Books*. Ph.D. dissertation. Dept. of Education, Lynch Graduate School of Education, Boston College.

1.2. Research Questions and Purpose of the Study

This research study was designed to examine the effectiveness of an online audio-book resource in two school libraries in Hong Kong in engaging young learners in more frequent reading practices. The questions directing the analysis for this research study include:

- *What was the nature and direction of changes in the number of students who would use the school library for pleasure-based reading or other literacy-related activities?*
- *Were there any changes in the amount of voluntary reading students undertook after being exposed to this chosen online audio resource five months later?*
- *What were students' views of online audio-books and on their evolving sense of reading?*
- *Where there any gendered differences in reading practices and reading attitudes in association with the online audio-book resource?*

In order to develop a deeper understanding of young learners' reading practices, including online audio-book resources, I also elicited the views of other classroom teachers, supporting staff from the two school libraries, and also the parents of the participants. All their perspectives and experiences contributed a great deal in assembling a picture on the opportunities and practices, benefits and drawbacks, of students using the chosen online audio-book resource as an educational tool in regular classroom, at school library and also at home.

1.3. Significance of Research – Originality and Values

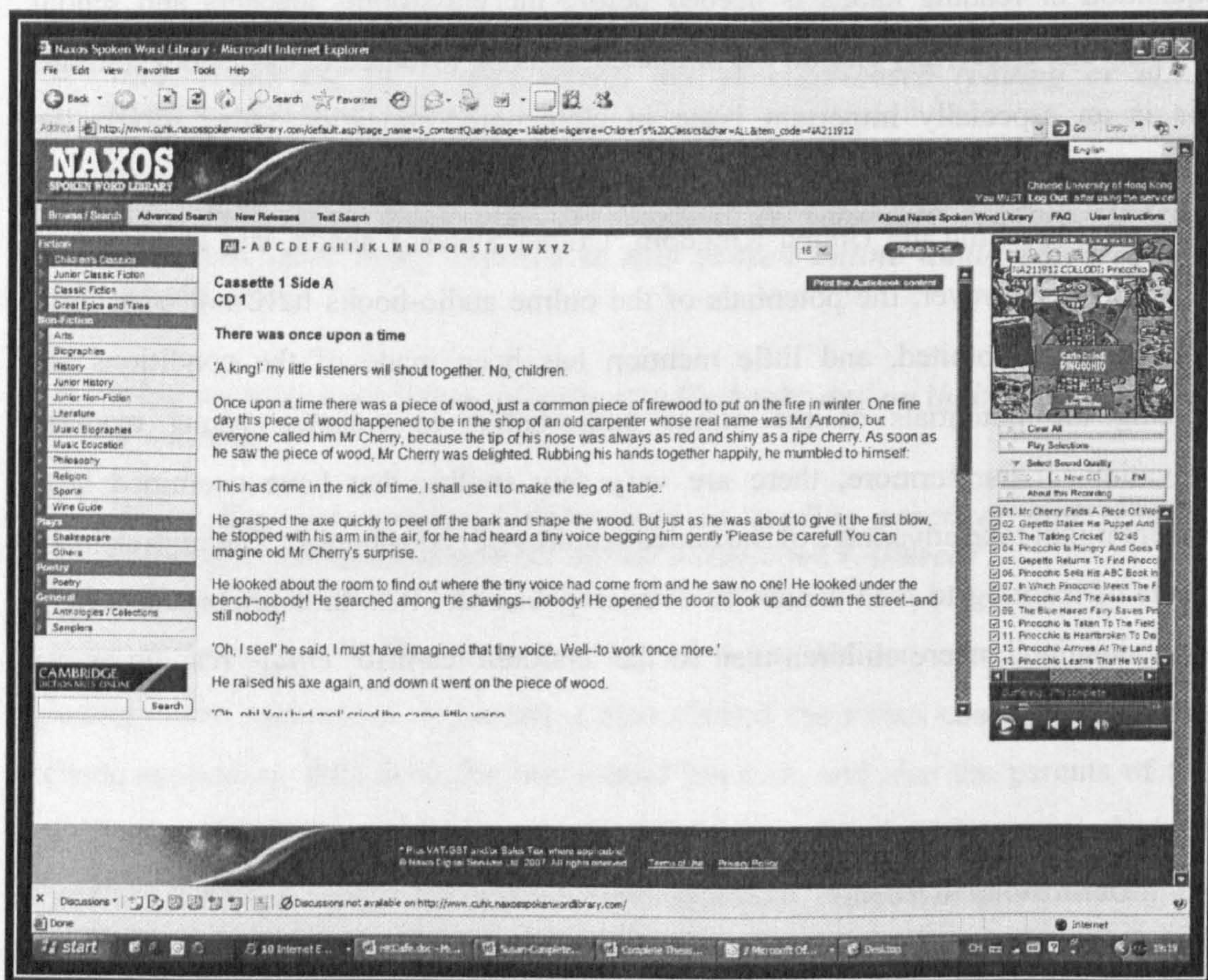
The significance of this project lies in its engagement with the potential for new reading tools to stimulate student success in reading and information skills in school settings. Because this project examined the use of online library resources amongst the students, the goal of strengthening young readers' engagement with library programmes at school might also be achieved. It was also a major step in school-wide collaboration between library staff and the classroom teachers. Now library time

could be viewed as an essential extension of the classroom curriculum and a significant part of the academic life of the students. Additionally, this research study can be considered timely in its aims and planned outcomes because of the increase in commercially available multi-media software and increased availability of computers in schools. An understanding of the ways that elementary-school children use online audio-books and how this might impact, positively and negatively, on literacy acquisition or reading habits is needed before the classrooms teachers and school librarians can effectively exploit the online audio-book resource in the school settings. This is an especially important issue in elementary education today, given the framework of the 'Library Literacy Class/Education' implemented in many different countries, (including the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Hong Kong, and so on). However, the potentials of the online audio-books have not been fully explored and exploited, and little mention has been made of the conditions for realizing the potentials of the online audio-books to enhance young readers' motivation. Furthermore, there are very few studies that have examined how teachers might take advantage of the added features of audio-books. The motivational aspects of learning to read cannot be over-emphasized. It is thus important to help create situations where children read so that children learn to '*enjoy*' reading as we '*teach*' them to read.

1.4. Definitions of Terms

'**Online Audio-Book**' is a term that refers to computer-/online-based storybooks which allow the user to hear the words of the story read out loud by professional narrators or actors. An electronic, computer, or online book is a document designed to be viewed on a computer screen, integrating the 'classical-book' structure with features that can be provided within an electronic environment. In the past, e-books have been expensive, priced either at the same level or higher than the paper-books. In addition to providing background music and sound effects for enhanced enjoyment to the original story, it also offers the reader other additional options, including pronunciation of words, definitions of difficult vocabulary, background information relevant to the topic, and the main idea of each paragraph. The audio-books were originally developed by the American Foundation for the Blind and the Library of

Congress as recorded books on record albums for the blind. The narrator read the text or story, thereby fulfilling an important recreational and information need for those unable to read the printed word. These “talking books” on records were eventually replaced with tapes following the advent of the cassette player. Cassette players flourished, supporting many advantages that led to the growth of today’s online audio-books.¹³



(Figure 1.1) Screenshot Example A: Audio-Book Title *Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi from the Naxos Spoken Word Library

‘**Teacher/School Librarian**’ is defined as a professional educator, also known as school librarian or school-library specialist.¹⁴ For a complete list of teaching and administrative duties performed and supervised by both Bradbury and Kingston School Librarian, please refer to Appendix 1.

¹³ GABRIEL, Mary (1998) *Audiobooks Turn Bars into Mobile Classroom*. Reuters.

¹⁴ KOLENICK, Patricia Liotta. (2001) *Principle and Teacher-Librarians: Building Collaborative Partnerships in the Learning Community*, Ed.D. dissertation, Pittsburgh, [Pa.]: University of Pittsburgh, pp. 15.

‘School Library’ is defined as the physical location within the school building which houses the print, non-print, and electronic reading and research resources; it is also sometimes known as a library-resource centre, a library-media centre, a learning-resource centre, an instructional-material centre or information centre.¹⁵

‘School Library Literacy Programmes’ are usually collaboratively planned and taught units of study developed through the shared expertise of the classroom teacher and the teacher/school librarian. They are based on the principles of inquiry and resource-based learning that integrate information literacy with other content areas designed to achieve the educational goals of the school.¹⁶

‘ICT’ (Information and Communication Technology) is composed of computing and communications facilities, which features in support teaching, classroom learning and a range of other activities in education. Linking computers through telecommunications networks allows teachers and students around the world to send text and pictures to each other with ease.¹⁷

‘Motivation’ is an individual’s desire to engage in an activity for either external rewards or for the intrinsic pleasure and enjoyment the activity brings. Thein defines motivation as “*the process involved in arousing, directing, and sustaining behaviour*”.¹⁸

‘Reading Motivation’ is an individual’s desire to read for the pleasure and joy that reading brings, or the attainment of external reward or acknowledgement.

‘Voluntary Reading’ voluntary, free, recreational, avid, pleasure or leisure reading is defined as reading for no other reason than for the pleasurable interaction between the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ LEASK, Marilyn and John MEADOWS. (eds.) (2000) *Teaching and Learning with ICT in the Primary School*. London: Routledge, pp. xiii.

¹⁸ THEIN, M. (1985) “Motivating Students to Become Successful in Reading.” *Journal of Reading Improvement*, Summer, Vol. 22, pp. 104.

reader and the text.¹⁹ For children, this type of reading in which the child selects his or her own reading materials and is aware of the materials that are available, immerses them in the implicit offerings of reading.

1.5. Outline of the Study

This research study consists of seven individual chapters. The current chapter already addresses the aims and significance of this study; Chapter 2 presents a review of selected literature that provides a framework for the current research, as well as to demonstrate a need for this study. Chapter 3 discusses in detail the research methodologies and instruments designed and used for this study, including detailed information on the different procedures and techniques for data collection. The following three chapters are dedicated to data analysis and answering the research questions. While Chapter 4 and 5 analyze both quantitative and qualitative data collected from the various research instruments, (for example, student questionnaires, focus group interviews, and audio-book online usage report, and so on), Chapter 6 sets out to answer all the original research questions by bringing all research findings together from different research instruments. In the final Chapter 7, I will give recommendations for future researches and use of online audio-books.

1.6. Conclusion to Chapter 1

In this chapter I have outlined the questions that I have set out to investigate, and argued why this is an important area of research. Specifically, I have suggested that when young learners read systematically, and when school libraries provide resources and opportunities for these practices, then this then contributes to the development of the learner. I have also argued that new kinds of tools for reading, such as online audio-books, might be viewed as a motivational tool for young learners to read, given that they involve new technologies and invoke multiple senses.

¹⁹ NELL, Victor. (1994) "The Insatiable Appetite." in Eugene H. CRAMER and Marrietta CASTLES. (eds.) in *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain*. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann, pp. 41-52.

CHAPTER 2

LIBRARIES, YOUNG LEARNERS, READING PRACTICES AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of selected literature that provides a framework for the current research, as well as to demonstrate a need for this study. Research pertinent to this study is presented in four different sections: the first section (Section 2.2) is devoted to discussing issues concerning elementary-school students' reading practices and motivation; the second section (Section 2.3) addresses the relationships between school libraries and elementary-school students' reading practices; while the third and fourth sections (Sections 2.4 and 2.5) focus on the development of ICT, and multimodality/multi-literacy and their relations to elementary-school students' reading motivation and overall learning. The last section explores the potentials of online audio-book resource in relation to students' reading practices.

2.2. Elementary-School Students' Reading Practices and Motivation

*"When children read for pleasure, when they get "hooked on books"', they acquire involuntarily and without conscious effort, nearly all of the so-called "language skills" mange people are concerned about: They will become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary, develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical constructions, develop a good writing style, and become good (but not necessarily perfect) spellers. Although free/voluntary reading alone will not ensure attainment of the highest levels of literacy, it will at least ensure an acceptable level. Without it, I suspect that children simply do not have a chance."*²⁰

Literacy has been a necessary prerequisite for functioning in society.²¹ People have read in order to fulfill occupational, community, and social needs. Some people also

²⁰ KRASHEN, Stephen. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., pp. 84.

²¹ THIMMESCH, N. (1984) *Aliteracy: People Who can Read but Won't*. Washington, D.C: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

have read simply for pleasure of doing so.²² It has been determined that motivation significantly influences learning. Studies suggest that recreational or voluntary reading habits should be acquired fairly early in an individual's school life, probably in elementary school, given that numerous studies have shown a decline in time spent on reading that begins in middle school.²³ Owing to this reason, educators, researchers, parents, as well as the wider society, have become increasingly interested in the role that reading engagement or reading motivation that actually plays in the growth of children's academic achievements, as well as their overall literacy developments. Children's literacy development also determines children's future success in reading and writing. For this reason, researchers and teachers have explored the problem from various aspects, such as teaching methods²⁴, classroom environments²⁵, family involvement²⁶, and community and societal environment, and so on.²⁷ Different results have been found and suggestions given in order to help develop children's literacy in and out of school. For example, results suggested that 1st-grade students who received a 'modified-whole-language-approach' instruction (incorporating daily fifteen-minute total class phonics instruction) made greater gains in phonics, vocabulary, reading comprehension and total reading achievement, than students in the basal programme. Factors related to students' increased motivation are closely associated with: a teacher who is a reading model; a book-rich classroom environment; opportunities for choice; familiarity with books; social interactions about books; and other literacy-related incentives that reflect the value of reading, and so on. However, given the vast amount of research conducted on reading, it seems

²² NELL, Victor. (1994) "The Insatiable Appetite." in Eugene H. CRAMER and Marrietta CASTLES. (eds.) in *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, pp. 41-52 ; ROSENTHAL, N. (1995) *Speaking of Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

²³ CAMPBELL, M.B. and M.M. KMIETIK (2004) "The Greatest Literacy Challenges Facing Contemporary High School Teachers: Implications for Secondary Teacher Preparation." *Reading Horizons*, Sept./Oct., Vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 1-25 ; GALLIK, J.D. (March, 1999) "Do They Read for Pleasure? Recreational Reading Habits of College Student." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, Vol. 42, No. 6, pp. 480-489.

²⁴ ELDREDGE, L. (1991). "An Experiment With a Modified Whole Language Approach in First-Grade Classrooms." *Reading Research and Instruction*, Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 21-38 ; MCKENNA, M.C., B.D. STRATTON, M.C. GRINDLER and S.J. JENKINS. (1995). "Differential Effects of Whole Language and Traditional Instruction on Reading Attitudes." *Journal of Reading Behavior*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 19-44 ; MORROW, L.W. (1992). "The Impact of a Literature-Based Program on Literacy Development, Use of Literature, and Attitudes of Children from Minority Backgrounds." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 250-275.

²⁵ GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996). "Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; REUTZEL, D. R., and WOLFERSBERGER, M. (1996) "An Environmental Impact Statement: Designing Supportive Literacy Classrooms for Young Children." *Reading Horizons*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 266-282.

²⁶ THORNBURG, D. G. (1993) "Intergenerational Literacy Learning with Bilingual Families: a Context for the Analysis of Social Mediation of Thought." *Journal of Reading Behaviour*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 323-352.

²⁷ NOLL, E., (1998) "Experiencing Literacy in and out of School: Case Studies of Two American Indian Youths." *Journal of Literacy Research*, Vol., 30, No. 2, pp. 205-232.

that little attention has been given to investigate children's actual reading motivation. The majority of research in reading has focused on examining the cognitive aspects of reading.²⁸ In addition, there is a common concern amongst reading educators is that there is no agreed upon methods for language arts (reading, writing, and oral communication) instruction today. Although research has been conducted and concepts applied to teaching practices, there is no conclusive evidence that one method, such as basals, or whole language, is the best.²⁹

2.2.1. Reading motivation and its relations to literacy development

*Motivation – “the drive that causes a person to do something, is necessary for learning to occur. It can derive from personality characteristics, an expectation of success, or incentives to succeed.”*³⁰ Motivation is an important key in learning to read.³¹ It is said that children's motivation to read in school and home environment decreases as children get older.³² The decline in motivation to read appears to be greatest from 1st- through 4th-grade.³³ It is because reading is an effortful activity that children often can choose to do or not to do. It also requires *motivation* for children to engage in literacy activities, and the level of efforts they exert.³⁴ When reading motivation decreases, the amount of reading children do usually decreases at the same time. Television, video games, and computers may even compete with reading outside of the school setting. This can be detrimental because the amount of reading influences children's reading comprehension and achievement.³⁵ As a result,

²⁸ GUTHRIE, J.T. and A. WIGFIELD. (2000) “Engagement and Motivation in Reading.” in M.L. KAMIL, P.B. MOSENTHAL, P.D. PEARSON and R. BARR. (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research*. (pp. 403-422) New York, N.Y.: Longman.

²⁹ GREER, Julia T. (1994) “Student Attitude Regarding a Reading Workshop: the Effects of the Process.” *ERIC (ED372364)*, pp. 4.

³⁰ *A Word about Motivation*. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/nagy/motivation.html> ; MAGGART, Z.R. and M.V. ZINTZ. (1992) *The Reading Process: the Teacher and the Learner*. (6th ed.) Dubuque, I.A.: Wm. C. Brown, pp. 46-49.

³¹ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT, and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education.

³² GUTHRIE, J.T. and A. WIGFIELD. (2000) “Engagement and Motivation in Reading.” in M.L. KAMIL, P.B. MOSENTHAL, P.D. PEARSON and R. BARR. (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research*. New York, N.Y.: Longman, pp. 403-422

³³ WIGFIELD, A., J.S. ECCLES, K.S. YOON, R.S. HAROLD, A. ARBERTON, K. FREEMAN-DOAN, and P.C. BLUMENFIELD. (1997) “Changes in Children's Competence Beliefs and Subjective Task Values Across the Elementary School Years: a Three-Year Study.” *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 89, No. 3, pp. 451-469.

³⁴ WIGFIELD, Allan, Kathleen WILDE and Linda BAKER. (1996) “The Nature of Children's Motivations for Reading, and Their Relations to Reading Frequency and Reading Performance.” *National Reading Research Center, Universities of Georgia and Maryland, Reading Research Report*, Summer, No. 63.

³⁵ ANDERSON, R.C., P.T. WILSON, and L.G. FIELDING. (1988) “Growth in Reading and How Children Spend Their Time Outside of School.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Summer, Vol. 23, No 3, pp. 285-303 ; MAZZONI, S.A., L.B. GAMBRELL, and R.L. KORKEAMAKI. (1999) “A Cross-Cultural Perspective of Early Literacy Motivation.” *Reading Psychology*, Vol. 20,

promoting reading engagement or motivation has been a major concern for many classroom teachers and school librarians. Teachers and librarians continue to emphasize that it is important for students to be active and strategic readers who choose to participate in reading activities under a regular basis. Readers who are active participants in the learning process tend to be engaged readers.³⁶ *“Children became fluent, primarily because of fluency’s (probably reciprocal) relationship with comprehension, but also because fluent readers tend to have more positive attitudes towards reading and a more positive concept of themselves as readers. As a result, fluent readers are more likely to read more and learn more, and become more fluent.”*³⁷

Voluntary Reading - reading itself promotes reading. Voluntary or free reading is the type of reading in which the child selects his or her own reading materials, is aware of the materials that are available, and becomes immersed in the implicit offerings of reading. Reading of this kind will substantially increase the student’s knowledge, furnish practice in reading, assist in expanding his or her vocabulary and comprehension, as well as potentially inspire the student to become a lifelong reader. Voluntary reading remains vital to the enrichment of the lives of the students.³⁸ Owing to these positive impacts on students’ literacy development, many researchers and educators are convinced that good voluntary reading habits should especially be stressed, because it is this type of reading that is effective, motivational, self-directed and enjoyable.³⁹ A consistent finding in in-school voluntary-reading studies is that children who participate in these programmes do more voluntary reading than children in traditional reading programmes by comparison.

No. 3, pp. 237-253 ; TAYLOR, B.M., B.J. FRYE, and G.M. MARUYAMA. (1990) “Time Spent Reading and Reading Growth.” *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 27, pp. 351-362.

³⁶ WILSON, Janell D. and Linda H. CASEY. (2007) “Understanding the Recreational Reading Patterns of Secondary Students.” *Reading Improvement*, Spring, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 40.

³⁷ OAKLEY, Grace. (March, 2003) “Improving Oral Reading Fluency (and Comprehension) Through the Creation of Talking Books.” *Reading Online*. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/oakley/> ; RASINKI, T. and N. PADAK. (2000) *Effective Reading Strategies: Teaching Children Who Find Reading Difficult*. (2nd ed.) Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill, pp. 38.

³⁸ PEMBROKE, June Latricia. (1997) *Using a Special Reading Program to Modify the Attitudes of Fifth-Grade Male Students Toward Voluntary Reading*. Ph.D. dissertation. College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

³⁹ Chicago Board of Education. (1991) *Recreational and Enrichment Reading: Elementary School*. Chicago, Ill.: Ted. D. Kimbrough.

Reading Engagement - reading engagement is thought to be deeply intertwined with many different factors.⁴⁰ Research has found that children's use of the library was a major factor in encouraging reading. Classroom, libraries, school bookclubs, and teachers allowing free reading time to take place in school were also major factors.⁴¹ The school librarian is considered one of the most important factors in making the school library a successful one. Other factors such as parents, peer groups, and teachers all seem to contribute to the overall development and maintenance of reading attitudes of children. Parents can also enhance their children's attitudes by involving them in reading activities, modeling leisure reading, creating and maintaining a harmonious household, providing much reading materials in the home, and fostering a strong sense of self-esteem in their children.⁴²

2.3. Connections between School Libraries and Elementary-School Students' Reading Practices

School Library and Reading – school libraries exist for three fundamental reasons. They must deliver on all three of these reasons or become increasingly marginal to their school's academic mission:⁴³

- provide instruction in library and information skills.
- provide instructional materials.
- help make proficient readers.

“The school library is more than a space to store books. This is an important distinction. A school library must be built as a place for instructing children and adolescents in how to find and use information, with storage space for materials secondary to this purpose. The school library requires a formal instructional area with tables, chairs, and computers. Additionally, an elementary-school library needs

⁴⁰ *Reading: Value of Reading Engagement for Children*. Available at: <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2354/Reading-VALUE-READING-ENGAGEMENT-CHILDREN.html>

⁴¹ CALLAWAY, N. (1981) “What Turns Children “On” or “Off” in Reading.” *Reading Improvement*, 18, pp. 214-217.

⁴² TAYLOR, D. (1983) *Family Literacy*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann ; TAYLOR, D. and DORSEY-GAINES, C. (1988) *Growing Up Literate: Learning Form Inner-City-Families*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

⁴³ NELSON, Bryce. (1999) “Purposes of School Libraries.” *ALKI: the Washington Library Association Journal*, March, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 10.

a 'softer' place for telling stories with children at the primary-grade level."⁴⁴ A well-stocked school library is a major ingredient for providing such access. Although long regarded as the cornerstone of the school community, school libraries are no longer just for books. Nowadays, the principal goal of the school library is to empower students to be effective users of information.⁴⁵ Another important role of school libraries is to promote higher reading achievement through access to books and free reading.⁴⁶ A school library provides instructional materials for some parts of the school's curriculum. Traditionally, school libraries have been thought of as supplementing or enriching the textbook curriculum. Today, some materials in a school library, whether printed or in electronic form, are considered or used as instructional materials for the whole class.

According to Pfau, 1st-graders participating in a sustained silent-reading programme for two years made more trips to the library, took out more books from the library, and mentioned reading more often when questioned about their leisure-time activities, when compared to children in classes where this activity was not present.⁴⁷ At the same time, Greaney and Clarke present spectacular results that 6th-grade boys who participated in an in-school free or voluntary-reading programme for eight and a half months not only did more leisure reading while they were in the programme, but also were still reading more than comparison students six years later.⁴⁸

One of the most important roles for school libraries is to promote higher reading achievement through access to books and free reading.⁴⁹ Research has found that students who attended the school library for two periods a day of free independent and shared reading experiences expressed a higher level of reading pleasure than those who participated in traditional reader instructions. It was also found that library was a

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ American Association of School Librarians and Association for Education Communications and Technology. (1998) *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago, Ill.: American Library Association.

⁴⁶ KRASHEN, S.D. (1995, Summer) "School Libraries, Public Libraries, and the NAEP Reading Scores." *School Library Media Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 235-238.

⁴⁷ PFAU, D. (1967) "Effects of Planned Recreational Reading Programs." *Reading Teacher*, Vol. 21, pp. 34-39.

⁴⁸ GREANEY, V. and M. CLARKE. (1973) "Longitudinal Study of the Effects of Two Reading Methods on Leisure-Time Reading Habits." in *Reading: What of the Future?* D. MOYLE (ed.) London: United Kingdom Reading Association, pp. 107-114.

⁴⁹ KRASHEN, S.D. (1995, Summer) "School Libraries, Public Libraries, and the NAEP Reading Scores." *School Library Media Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 235-238.

major factor in encouraging reading. Classroom libraries, school bookclubs, and teachers allowing free reading time to take place in the schools were also major factors contributing to the development of positive reading attitudes.⁵⁰

2.3.1. Role of school library and its impacts on student learning and reading

The benefits and contributions of the school library to students' overall learning are evident. As a result, today there is an increasing number of elementary schools beginning to make curriculum shifts from various practices, among which might be literature-based reading, whole language, and the use of traditional programmes, classes being scheduled in the library for a period a week, checking out books, looking up specific information, and perhaps listening to a story. The library programme is now being solicited to become a counterpart to classroom activities in order that they might become more involved in the child's formal learning. Unfortunately, reading is still often not one of the more popular activities amongst younger students. However, a well-crafted voluntary-reading programme can provide the extra motivation and support to encourage students to pursue reading for enjoyment and enrichment. The practice of reading, and reading for pleasure, will ultimately affect the overall reading performance of the student. To accomplish this, it is suggested that teachers, librarians and families work together to promote voluntary reading.⁵¹

2.3.2. Digital technologies and impacts of school-library services

Given the advent of digital technologies, the nature of the school library has changed drastically, both in the types of materials found there and access to these resources. With the growth of multiple forms of media, including sound recordings, (for example, cassette tapes, compact discs), videotapes, DVDs, CD-ROMs, and filmstrips, and so on, school libraries have evolved into "...*school library media centres*", as they provide a learning environment that offer a full range of printed, as well as other non-print materials, for example, computers/online resources that enable the children to engage meaningfully with a wide variety of information. At the same time, school librarians have become school-library-media specialists. These resource centres with

⁵⁰ SHAPIRO, J. and W. WHITE (1991) "Reading Attitudes and Perceptions in Traditional and Nontraditional Reading Programs." *Reading Research and Instruction*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 52-66.

⁵¹ PEMBROKE, June Latricia. (1997) *Using a Special Reading Program to Modify the Attitudes of Fifth-Grade Male Students Toward Voluntary Reading*. Ph.D. dissertation. College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Campaign.

trained staff support the use of the electronic information resources not just in the centre, but help to integrate resources in the classrooms and throughout the curriculum.⁵² Librarians no longer 'shush' students, but aim to encourage, support and involve them in active learning. As a result, school libraries are striving to be more active, engaging and open places. They not only empower students to be effective users of ideas, information and technology, they also include "virtual as well as physical space".⁵³ The focus of the library has shifted from being an information storehouse to being the centre access point for information literacy, sought out by students, parents and staff.⁵⁴ The card catalogue has now been replaced by the OPAC (One Public Access Catalogue). Encyclopedias and other reference materials, once designated as "library use only", are now available as online databases. In many areas, these reference materials may be used not only by students who walk through the doors of the library but also anyone with access to the internet. The primary goal of a modern-day school library is to empower students to be effective users of information and other educational resources.⁵⁵

2.3.3. Making school library an 'exciting' place for children

Because research shows that students need to spend a large amount of time reading in order to improve on their reading skills⁵⁶, what better place for children to have online access to books than their own classroom or school library. Providing access to books is thus a necessary but not sufficient, condition for encouraging reading. Providing an inviting/child-friendly environment and a rich collection of books (both printed and electronic) within their range of interests is another effective technique to promoting voluntary reading through classrooms and school libraries. Polette suggested that the school librarian, being a valuable member of the educational team, should constantly develop effective strategies and make maximum use of the library resources available

⁵² U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. (2004) *School Libraries Work!* Washington, D.C.: Scholastic Library Publishing, pp. 3.

⁵³ NEUMAN, S. (2002) "The Role of School Libraries in Elementary and Secondary Education." Presented at the *Whitehouse Conference on School Libraries Proceedings*, 4th June 2002, pp. 1. Available at: <http://www.laurabushfoundation.com/Neuman.pdf>

⁵⁴ BARTON, Rhonda. (2006) "No More Story Lady." *Northwest Education Magazine*, Vol. 9, No. 1. Available at: <http://www.nwrel.org/nwedu/09-01/story.asp>

⁵⁵ American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology (1998) *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago, Ill.: American Library Association.

⁵⁶ ALLINGTON, R.L. (2001) *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs*. New York, N.Y.: Addison Wesley Longman.

to simulate and ‘lure’⁵⁷ all types of learners to voluntary or self-motivating reading. However, just having books in the classroom is not enough for voluntary reading. There are also many other factors that could make voluntary reading more desirable for the children at the library. For example, the physical characteristics of the reading environment are equally important. It was reported that children in schools with larger collections (full school libraries) made better gains in reading than did children in schools with smaller central collections, who in turn made better gains collection.⁵⁸ Morrow also reported that pre-school and kindergarten children used the library corner more when it had pillows, easy chairs, and carpets, and when it was partitioned off and quiet.⁵⁹ In addition, any increase in the number of students impacts on the physical environment. There was less space available for literacy activities, and less room available for students to find their own space to read. It is suggested using the following school library design:

- **Comfortable seating** - the library should have comfortable seating, which includes carpeting, chairs, beanbags, and so on.
- **Sufficient number of books** - that is five to six copies per child; duplicates are acceptable.
- **Sufficient area** – where a small community of readers should be able to occupy the area.
- **Literature and promotion** (theme-oriented displays and props) – such as bulletin boards, displays, posters and book jackets which related to the books should be attractively exhibited.

2.4. Relations between ICT and Elementary-School Students’ Reading Motivation

“Computer technologies in elementary and secondary education are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and new and complex computer software is being designed and presented to educational institutions rapidly. As a result, computer technologies are increasing in use in both elementary and secondary classrooms. Unfortunately, many computer innovations introduced to school

⁵⁷ POLETTE, Nancy and Marjorie HAMLIM. (1975) *Reading Guidance in a Media Age*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

⁵⁸ GAVER, M. (1963) *Effectiveness of Centralized Library Service in Elementary School*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

⁵⁹ MORROW, L. (1983) “Home and School Correlates of Early Interest in Literature.” *Journal of Educational Research*, Mar./Apr., Vol. 76, No. 4, pp. 221-230.

systems are praised for their “newness, ingenuity, and their graphic displays”, as opposed to their pedagogical applicability. Multi-media is an example of a contemporary complex computer technology where the sophistication of the technologies can dazzle the users with impressive graphics, live video, real voices, and music and effects. Talking/spoken/audio-books combine multi-media features such as animation, quality illustrations, music with text, and online assistance features, and so on, and some of these features are created to enhance the reading experience (for example, music, animation, and so on), while others are designed to help young readers deal with difficult or unknown words, and concepts (for example, pronunciation and vocabulary assistance, and so on). Because of these sophisticated features, audio-storybooks are advertised by the publishers and software designers as advantageous to elementary language arts instruction.”⁶⁰

Each day, technology becomes ever more pervasive in our culture. It is an ongoing recursive, interactive process involving varied audiences and texts.⁶¹ In school districts around the world, the classroom use of computer technology tools is currently a hot topic. Literacy in modern society is becoming increasingly complex, as resources of the school library now extend far beyond its walls out into the world. The transition from the information age to the digital communication age is reflected in classrooms around the world. Many classroom teachers and school librarians are gradually modifying their language arts instructions by incorporating the use of ICT to meet the individual students’ needs more effectively. Digital communication and multi-media technologies are indeed re-defining the long-held beliefs about what it means to be literate, and to learn.⁶² Developing literate students has always been one of the major goals of education, and as the resources which are used to develop literacy have evolved over time, the challenge for teachers and students has increased. In the midst of the knowledge explosion, it has become imperative, according to Talbott⁶³, that students learn how to access information rather than memorizing information. There is no way students can ‘harness’ the information explosion without problem-solving skills. In this new digital environment, school librarians are

⁶⁰ DEJEAN, Jilian. (1995) “CD-ROM Talking Books: a Case Study of Promise and Practice.” Paper presented at the *Annual Conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education* (23rd, Montreal, Quebec, Canada), pp. 3.

⁶¹ FLOWER, L. (1989) “Cognition, Context, and Theory Building.” *College Composition and Communication*, October, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 282-311.

⁶² LEMKE, B. (1999) “Metamedia Literacy: Transforming Meanings and Media.” in D. REINKING, M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, and R.D. KIEFFER (eds.) (1998) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, pp. 283-301 ; NEGROPONTE, N. (1995) *Being Digital*. New York, N.Y.: Knopf.

⁶³ TALBOTT, S. (1998, 25th June 25-1st July). Address. ALA Annual Conference, Washington. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/online/newes//annual.cfm>

urged to work collaboratively with teachers to provide authentic, effective learning experiences “*that encourage students and others to become discriminating consumers and skilled creators of information through comprehensive instruction related to the full range of communications media and technology.*”⁶⁴

Researchers believed that the new digital technologies can help teachers discard the teacher-centred transmission model of teaching and replace it with a student-centred constructivist model of learning.⁶⁵ Many educators agree that computer literacy involves more than software skills and understanding the value of technology. For classroom teachers, computer literacy also includes a positive attitude about their ability to apply technology in real classroom instructions. For example, the unprecedented advances in interactivity and multi-media capabilities together with a myriad of emerging technologies have enabled the creation of virtual-learning environments that could be utilized to boost the development of reading and English-language skills amongst the students. For teachers and librarians, to use new tools wisely and appropriately for the task at hand may be the “*greatest challenge we all face as we seek to understand both the new many new electronic tools becoming available for literacy and the ways in which these tools redefine literacy tasks*”.⁶⁶

Researchers have found that engaging in literacy activities with different media texts (for example, traditional print, images, sound, video, and so on) can promote instructional goals and practices, including the literacy learning of diverse populations and thereby fostering multi-cultural appreciation.⁶⁷ Reading and writing across media also provides an opportunity to use technology to promote the practices of cooperative learning, use of multi-cultural texts, and critical thinking.⁶⁸ According to Reinking

⁶⁴ American Association of School Librarians and Association for Education Communications and Technology. (1998) *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago, Ill.: American Library Association, pp. 7.

⁶⁵ GARNER, R. and M.C. GILLINGHAM. (1998) “The Internet in the Classroom: Is It the End of Transmission-Oriented Pedagogy?” in D. REINKING, M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, and R.D. KIEFFER (eds.) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, pp. 221-231.

⁶⁶ KINZER, C. and D.J. LEU, jr. (1997) “The Challenge of Change: Exploring Literacy and Learning in Electronic Environment.” *Language Arts*, February, Vol. 74, No. 2, pp. 135.

⁶⁷ PAILLIOTET, A.W. (1998) “Reading and Writing Across the Media: Using Diverse Educational Technologies in Literacy Learning.” in R.M. BRANCH and M.A. FITZGERALD (eds.) *Educational Media and Technology Yearbook 12*. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, pp. 76-93.

⁶⁸ CONSIDINE, D.M. and G. E. HALEY (1992) *Visual Messages: Integrating Imagery into Instruction*. Englewood, Co.: Teacher Ideas Press.

and Schreiner, the increased comprehension brought by ICT was not due to the increased time on task, but possibly due to the active processing of the text, which was provided by the computer-based assistance. According to Robinson and Zaitun, *“English lessons that incorporate multi-media applications can be a powerful motivator and provide bored students with exciting new ways to learn”*.⁶⁹ The importance of providing the learner with a multitude of experiences mediated through ICT is emphasized by Bruner (1969)⁷⁰, who argued that *“stimulus heterogeneity at an early age is crucial ingredient in intellectual growth. For children learning to read within an enhanced multi-media environment, reading becomes enjoyable and engaging, even for the most reluctant students”*. The utilization and integration of ICT tools can indeed assist students in acquiring English language competency as well as enhancing the quality of their learning experience. In other words, the major current trend in the field of reading is the increased attention to the electronic environment. ‘Computer applications in language arts’ and ‘interactive literature’ are among the buzz words summarizing current movements in teaching reading.⁷¹

2.5. The Need and Trend for Multi-literacy/Multimodal Education and the Multimodal Nature of Young Children’s Literacy Learning

The recent turn towards virtual connectivity, multimodality and interdisciplinary has led to a drastic increase in the number of texts becoming available in digital form. Users also access information in different ways that have potentially profound ramifications for reading and writing. The concern with multi-literacy and multimodality has grown out of the current drive to re-conceptualize the focus and definition of language education. Despite the claim that multimodality is new on the literacy scene, children have always engaged in what are now called ‘multimodal literacy practices’. The turn toward multimodality can be traced back to the interest in understanding young children’s literacy learning and development that took hold in

⁶⁹ ROBINSON, Joseph Samuel, Abu Bakar ZAITUN. (May/June, 2006) “The Utilization and Integration of ICT Tools in Promoting English Language Teaching and Learning: Reflections from English Option Teachers in Kuala Langat District, Malaysia.” *International Journal of Education Development Using Information and Communication Technology*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 4.

⁷⁰ BRUNER, J. (1969) “Cognitive Consequence of Early Sensory Deprivation.” in R. SPRINTHAL and N. SPRINTHAL (eds.) *Educational Psychology: Selected Readings*. New York, N.Y.: Van Nostrand-Reinhold, pp. 34.

⁷¹ REINKING, D. and R. SCHREINER. (1985) “The Effects of Computer-Mediated Text on Measures of Reading Comprehension and Reading Behavior.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 5, pp. 536-552.

the late 1970s.⁷² *"It is worth recalling that the earliest reading research undertaken in Germany in the mid and late nineteenth century was an attempt to study the psychological effects of different patterns of manuscript layout and typeface. Although the fundamental principles of reading and writing have not changed, the process has shifted from the serial cognitive processing of linear print text to parallel processing of multimodal text-image information sources. Text and meaning are no longer embedded exclusively in a linear sequence of alphabetic characters combined in a logical sequence of phrase, sentence, paragraph, and narrative units dictated by author intent or formatting demands of a page or book. In addition to the potential alternation of the cognitive and psycholinguistic processes of reading, requisite sociolinguistic competences have increased with an expanding 'grammar' of semiotic imagery and codes".*⁷³ Finally, the behavioural, bodily, and gestural practices of responding to a constructing text are also in transition.

In the past, the dominant view of literacy was that it was primarily a cognitive act, involving merely the mental processes of reading and writing. Literacy was then considered a *"large fixed, individualistic and psychological ability."*⁷⁴ Writing was understood often to be both inspired by and accompanied by imagery, but writing remained the focus.⁷⁵ Being literate simply involved possessing the skills to decode and encode, and both skills were understood as mental operations. But now, literacy is being understood to be a social practice.⁷⁶ Instead of being located solely in the head, it is understood to be located in social settings, and, like images, instead of being located in the texts themselves, it is also understood to be located in contexts. Literacy is seen as dynamic. Literacy is seen to change over time in response to changing applications of technology and social preoccupations, and, like visual imagery, to be profoundly political in the sense that it is used at every level with the intent to define and control the direction of events. In the digital-knowledge and

⁷² SIEGEL, Marjorie. (2006) "Reading the Signs: Multimodal Transformation in the Field of Literacy Education." *Language Arts*, September, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp. 66.

⁷³ LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 399.

⁷⁴ AKINS, S.J. (2001) *Constructing Visual Literacy Teaching: an Investigation of Two Primary School Teachers' Construction of Visual Literacy Teaching*. Unpublished honours dissertation. University of Tasmania. Launceston, Australia, pp. 11.

⁷⁵ BERTHOFF, A.E. (ed.) (1984) *Reclaiming the Imagination: Philosophical Perspectives for Writers and Teachers of Writing*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook ; EMIG, J. (1983) *The Web of Meaning: Essays on Writing, Teaching, Learning and Thinking*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook.

⁷⁶ SLATER, D. (1997) *Consumer Culture and Modernity*. London: Polity Press.

networked environments, critical understandings of the relations among ideas, their sources and histories, and inter-textual referents and consequences, are as important if not more so that the mastery, reproduction, and re-combination of discrete facts or units of information. The conceptual shift here is one from collection to connection, or what Bernstein might have termed curricular collection codes to what we could term connection codes.⁷⁷ The global cross-cultural information flow on the Internet, and the global composition of many virtual communities (whether chat, gaming, special interest, or classroom communities), requires new ways of thinking about trans-cultural communication in our 'reading' of and interaction with others from culturally diverse backgrounds. Inter-textuality, trans-cultural communication, multimedia, or inter-mediality; meta-media and multimodal multi-literacy are features of the new communicative order in which young people's orientation to online information, knowledge, learning, and communication is shaped.⁷⁸

Indeed, the digital technologies have re-mediated the traditional genres and forms of reading and associated literacy competencies have generated new modes of textual practices and immediacy.⁷⁹ *"When learning is no longer geographically tied to a desk, the school library, the book, or the teacher who demands "all eyes up front", then the old-style transmission and surveillance pedagogy becomes less stable and less defensible but complementary to the out-of-school pedagogies and practices in household, communities, and workplace."*⁸⁰

Reinking, McKenna, Labbo, and Kieffer also observed that *"literacy and technology are no longer mutually exclusive, but have merged in a combined vocabulary evident in most current educational debates and policy discourses"*.⁸¹ How are literacy

⁷⁷ BERNSTEIN, B. (1996) *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*. London: Taylor and Francis.

⁷⁸ LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 401.

⁷⁹ BOLTER, J.D. and R. GRUSIN. (2000) *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press.

⁸⁰ LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 389.

⁸¹ LUKE, Carmen. (2003) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinarity: Media and Online Literacy Studies, Online-Only Supplementary Material." *International Reading Association*. Available at: http://www.reading.org/General/Publications/Journals/RRQ/SupplementalContent/rrq_rrq-38-3-hagood-suppl_4.aspx?mode=redirect&D=101598/RRQ.38.3.4 ; REINKING, D., M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, L.D. and R.D. KIEFFER. (eds.) (1998) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.

practices mediated by microcomputers, connectivity, and the Internet? Further, an expanding educational-software industry and interest in how instructional practices, learning, reading, and writing are being transformed, have been of growing and serious concern to many educational researchers and teachers.⁸² Multi-literacy is now employed to mean the making of meaning through the interaction of different communicative modes, or, as Cope and Kalantzis put it, “*the multimodal relations between different meaning-making processes that are now so critical in media texts and the texts of electronic multi-media*”.⁸³

Computer-mediated and online reading and writing are creative design practices of crafting and manipulating dynamic representational resources.⁸⁴ These practices are increasingly less exclusively related to lexico-syntactic text and more to a foregrounding of complex iconography of picture, symbols, moving images, and sound embedded in a background environment (and complex cultural and political economy) of global connectivity.⁸⁵ The new patterns of learning will require something more than an acritical application of traditional methodologies often dictated by research funding criteria. The transformation of singular print-based literacy into hyphenated, plural, or multiple literacies has forced educators and librarians to acknowledge the diversity of information sources and media that people access, negotiate, and redeploy in everyday context. For example, ICT’s and global connectivity have transformed many aspects of public and private life. One does not read the language and then the pictures and then listen to the sounds; rather, one takes them in a ‘*gestalt*’, a whole, all at once. This then is the challenge of multimodality for education.⁸⁶

⁸² ALVERMANN, D.E. (ed.) (2002) *Adolescents and Literacies in a Digital World*. New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang ; DURRANT, C. and C. BEAVIS. (eds.) (2001) *P(ICT)ures of English: Teachers, Learners, and Technology*. Melbourne, VIC, Australia: Wakefield Press ; HAWISHER, G. and C. SEIFE (eds.) (2000) *Global Literacies and the World Wide Web*. New York, N.Y.: Routledge ; SNYDER, I. (2002) *Silicon Literacies: Communication, Innovation and Education in the Electronic Age*. London: Routledge.

⁸³ COPE, B. and K. KALANTZIS. (eds.) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. Melbourne: Macmillan, pp. 24.

⁸⁴ KRESS, G. and T. VAN LEEUWEN. (1996) *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.

⁸⁵ LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) “Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 400.

⁸⁶ DUNCUM, Paul. (2004) “Visual Culture Isn’t Just Visual: Multiliteracy, Multimodality and Meaning.” *Studies in Art Education*, Spring, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 259.

2.6. Potentials of Online Audio-Books – a Summary

“For most adults, reading is an experience usually associated with soft-chairs, quiet spaces, and maybe even a fireplace. No matter how intriguing the prose, the experience of scrolling through text on a computer screen is just not the same. Reading seems to trigger similar associations with kids. When the children in our school are reading books, they always look for a cozy corner with a pillow, or slide under a table and stretch out on their stomachs, shifting and turning in order to carve out the little extra piece of comfort. The computer might seem a brash intruder into this world. But new multi-media technology and an array of new software are challenging us to rethink some longstanding beliefs about reading. At the heart of the technology are the CD-ROM and e-books. The vast storage space allows the developers to combine text with rich illustrations, animation, and even background music and sound effects. Glossaries and dictionaries can be added, giving readers the opportunity to see or even listen to definitions of words they don’t understand. Speech technology enables whole texts or selected portions to be read aloud, or offers a second-language user a quick translation of an unfamiliar word. Stories can be followed by on-screen activities that allow the reader to explore themes or to find out about historical background. Younger children can manipulate characters and reconstruct scenes by simply moving a mouse. A good story always invites readers to extend their thinking or imagination.”⁸⁷

It is argued that societal expectations, growing demands of a global society, and the influence of technological knowledge, require more complex literacy skills. The ability to read, interpret, analyze, and evaluate knowledge will be critical in this technological age.⁸⁸ The increasingly complex demands placed on literacy are highlighted in predictions of trends for literacy in the workplace. This includes the expansion of multiple-literacy skills⁸⁹, the ability to access, analysis, synthesize, and evaluate sources of information⁹⁰, and the integration of different facets of literacy including reading, writing, listening, speaking and information skills.⁹¹ The increasing complexity of literacy skills will have caused a significant impact on the diverse learners, as well as struggling readers.

⁸⁷ PAR HAM, Charles. (1993) “CD-ROM Storybooks: New Ways to Enjoy Children’s Literature.” *Technology and Learning*, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 34.

⁸⁸ SMITH, M. Cecil, Larry MIKULECKY, Michael W. KIBBY, Marian Jean DREHER and Janice A. DOLE. (2000) “What Will be the Demands of Literacy in the Workplace in the Next Millennium?” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 380-381 ; ROUTMAN, R. (1996) *Literacy at the Crossroads: Crucial Talk About Reading, Writing, and Other Teaching Dilemmas*. Portsmouth, N.H. Heinemann.

⁸⁹ SMITH, M. Cecil, Larry MIKULECKY, Michael W. KIBBY, Marian Jean DREHER and Janice A. DOLE. (2000) “What Will be the Demands of Literacy in the Workplace in the Next Millennium?” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 380-381 ; Ibid., pp. 379-380.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 380-381.

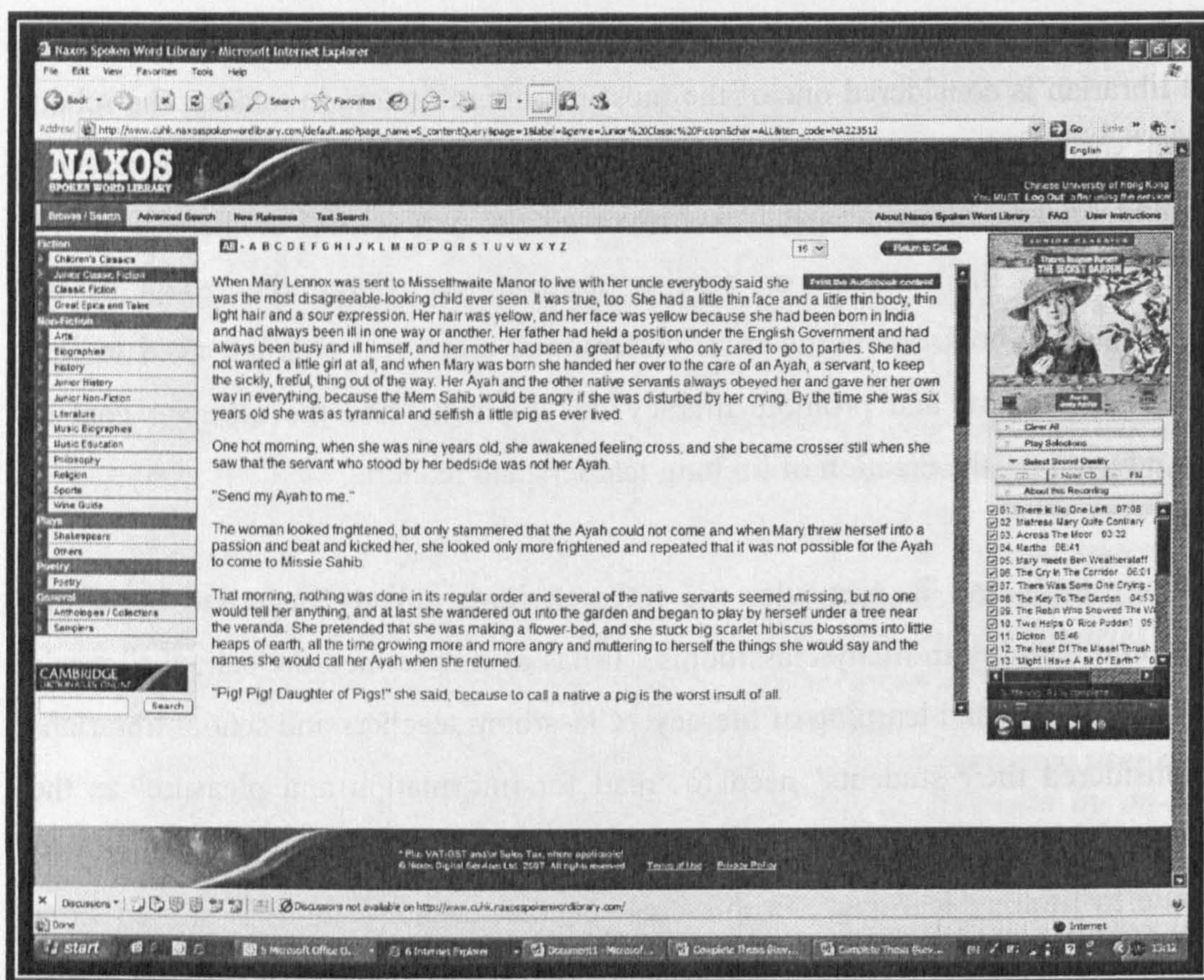
⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 381-382.

It has been determined that motivation significantly influences learning, and the school librarian is considered one of the most important factors in making the school library a successful one. As a result, there is a significant amount of research concerning reading motivation that has involved the exploration of the use of I.T. technologies and their impact on reading motivation. Given the extent of the diversities within both urban and rural classrooms, there is a pressing need to find new ways to support and promote literacy development, and the ultimate goal of literacy education - the creation of lifelong learners and readers.

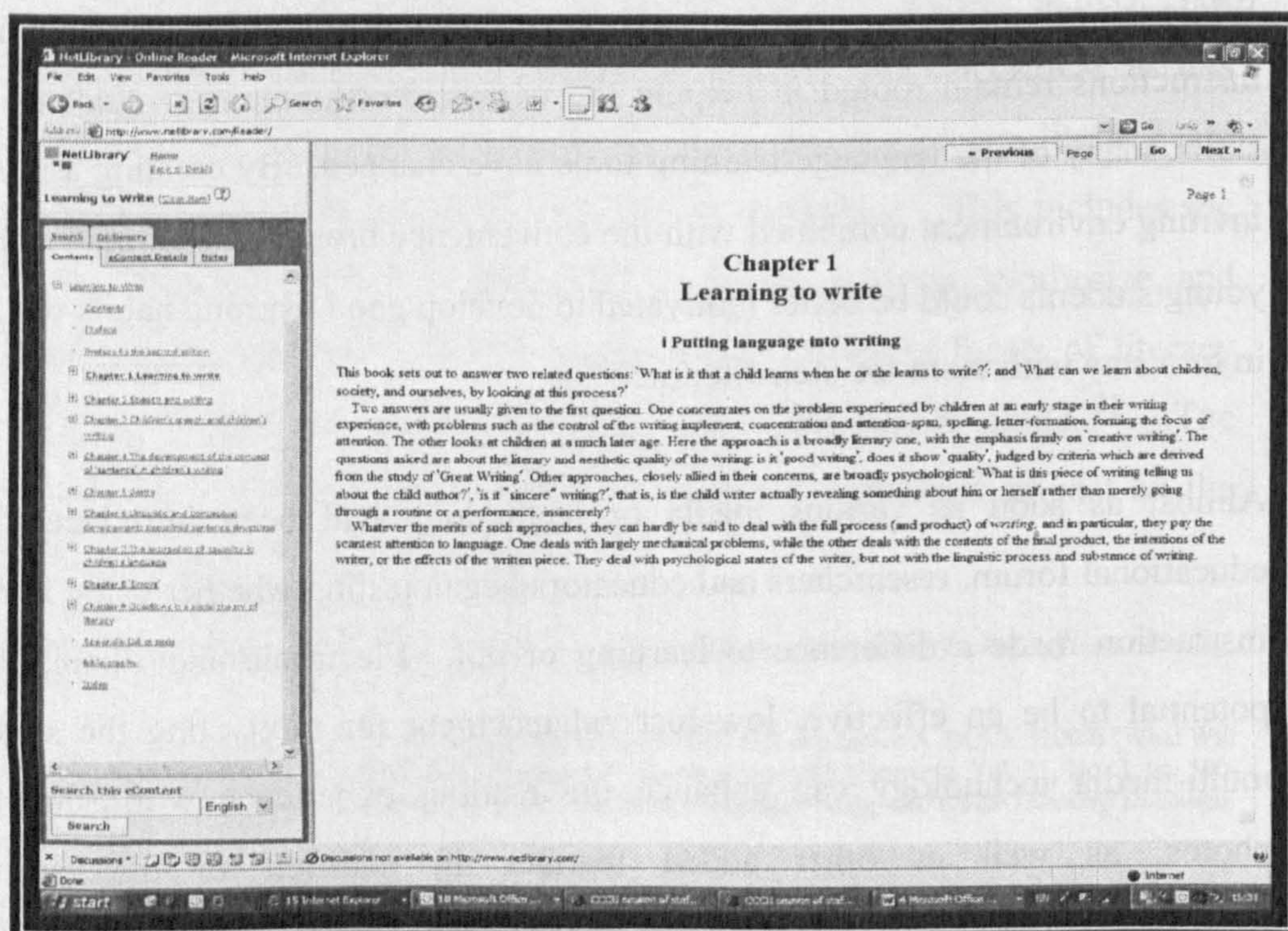
Technology tools and in particular the Internet, have already begun to transform teaching and learning in many classrooms. It has also redefined the school library's role in the teaching and learning of literacy. Classroom teachers and school librarians have considered their students' need to 'read for information and pleasure' as the most essential element, and they recognize that being an independent learner will contribute to lifelong learning. In this concept, the teacher's role has shifted from being an instructor to becoming a coach and facilitator, and the school library is supposed to play a central role in this.

While the school library (physical environment and resources) as well as library-skill instructions remain rooted in helping the overall development of students' literacy skills, many of the language-learning tools have changed. By creating a relaxed and inviting environment combined with the convenience brought by online technologies, young students could be better motivated to develop good learning habits which might in turn stay with them for their lifetime.

Almost as soon as various media or technology had been introduced into the educational forum, researchers and educators began testing whether using it to deliver instruction made a difference to learning or not. Electronic audio-books have the potential to be an effective, low-cost enhancement for motivating the students, as multi-media technology can enhance the reading experience with sound, online photos, as well as other added features in addition to the online text.



(Figure 2.1) Screenshot Example B: Audio-Book Title *The Secret Garden* by Frances H. Burnett from Naxos Spoken Word Library



(Figure 2.2) Screenshot Example C: Regular Electronic Book (without audio facility) entitled, *Learning to Write* by Gunther Kress from the NetLibrary

The use of the audio-books provides an opportunity for the students to read the text at their appropriate instructional level. Reading and listening to audio-books might have the potential to improve the reading ability of students, change the attitude of struggling readers, and create lifetime readers. For example, good narration can give children, who are apt to read aloud in a monotone, a lesson in oral interpretation. In addition, being entertaining and enjoyable for the students, some of the online audio-book resources combine sophisticated programming with the traditional tools of the storyteller to create engrossing fictional worlds. Listening to stories online does not need to be confined to the language arts. Exploring the story allows the young readers to enter to other levels of language and learning, for example, appreciation of history, art, music and world cultures. In addition, it has the potential to help students become more self-directed learners. Increasing access to books promotes independent reading but does not guarantee that students will choose to read. The research on listening comprehension highlights important connections between oral and written language skills.⁹² Reading while listening draws on the benefits of using both modalities to enhance text comprehension. Additionally, reading while listening to audio-books provides opportunities for students to read independently. The benefits of reading independently have been well documented in the research literature.⁹³ Rather, their attitudes towards reading and their motivation significantly influences the development of the students' love of reading.⁹⁴ As a result, audio-books could be powerful motivational tools to connect the students to books.

2.7. Conclusion to Chapter 2

The new concept of multimodal literacy education focuses not only on the interaction of spoken and written text and images, but it also deals with music and sound effects. As a result, we need to move beyond the quantitative/qualitative divide and craft new

⁹² PEARSON, P.D. and L. FIELDING. (1982) "Research Update: Listening Comprehension." *Language Arts*, Vol. 59, No. 6, pp. 617-629 ; STICHT, T.G. and J.H. JAMES. (1984) "Listening and Reading." in P.D. PEARSON (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research*, Vol. 1, (pp. 293-317) New York, N.Y.: Longman, Inc.

⁹³ ALLINGTON, R.L. (2001) *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs*. New York, N.Y.: Addison Wesley Longman ; ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT, and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; TAYLOR, B.M., B.J. FRYE, and G.M. MARUYAMA. (1990) "Time Spent Reading and Reading Growth." *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 27, pp. 351-362.

⁹⁴ O'DAY, Pamela S. (2002) *Reading While Listening: Increasing Access to Print Through the Use of Audio Books*. Ph.D. dissertation. Dept. of Education, Lynch Graduate School of Education, Boston College, pp. 16.

hybrid methodologies and theories that, in effect, must play catch-up with the unprecedented textual and social practices that students are already engaging with, often on the sly. In one sense, students and teachers are the ones who are already experimenting with new technologies and pushing the boundaries of research, however intuitively and randomly.⁹⁵ Having examined its nature and unique features, the online audio-book resource is considered one of the best resources available so far that possess the potential to transform the former linear-print-text reading experience into the parallel processing of multimodal text-image and audio-learning experience for the young learners. In addition, it is also believed that reading while listening to audio-books has the potential to be an effective, low-cost enhancement for improving literacy learning in classroom. Given there is limited research available on the benefits of using audio-books in electronic format in the school-library environment, it is therefore imperative that school librarians and educators work closely together to explore multiple means of assisting the students to cope with the ever-changing environment through classrooms, as well as school libraries - for the efficiency purposes and for on-going learning opportunities for the new generation of young students.

Based on these reasons, it was therefore decided that a newly available online audio-book resource Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) be chosen for this research – to examine from multiple perspectives, its role and effects in increasing elementary-school students' motivation for voluntary reading, as well as its effects in enhancing their incentives of self-directed learning activities under the school-library environment. In the next chapter, I will discuss in detail various methodologies and instruments and procedures which I developed and adopted in measuring the effectiveness of the chosen online audio-book resource in two school libraries in engaging young learners in more frequent reading practices. Other details regarding the limitations I encountered during the research, characteristics of the study population, criterion for measuring the effectiveness of the chosen online audio resource will also be addressed in Chapter 3.

⁹⁵ LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary." *Reading Research, Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 402.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND INSTRUMENTS

3.1. Introduction

Given that this study is examining the potential for electronic audio-books in school libraries to increase students' motivation for voluntary reading, I needed to design an approach to the research that enabled me to explore this question. This chapter outlines the broad research design that included both quantitative and qualitative sources of data. It begins by describing the profile and characteristics of the study population, such as the number of participants, social background of the students and conditions of the school. It is then followed by detailed descriptions of various instruments used for the study. The research schedule, data-collection procedures and various research limitations encountered during the course of this study, are also reported in full detail.

3.2. Research Design and Nature of Data Collected

For this study, a number of different data sources were used, and that included both quantitative and qualitative data. However, the quantitative questionnaire surveys are the primary source of data because this study focused on measuring the changes in library usage and reading quantity amongst students exposed by online audio-books. Additional sources of data included teacher and parent rating scales on the chosen audio resource, statistical monthly usage reports generated directly from the NSWL (Naxos Spoken Word Library) software, focus group interviews with students as NSWL users. The inclusion of multiple sources of data provided depth and served as an on-going method for triangulating the results. The school librarians and I had no preconceived notions about students' responses. My goal was therefore to reach a deeper understanding of the participants' lived experiences.

3.3. Study Population - the Chosen Schools and their Students

The two international elementary schools selected for this research project were Bradbury Elementary School and Kingston Elementary School, and are both located in Hong Kong (SAR)⁹⁶, China. Both Bradbury and Kingston are private elementary schools, and are relatively well-resourced, compared with many other Chinese-medium-of-instruction elementary schools funded by the local Hong Kong government. All the students are from families of comparatively high economic status, and some parents could be described as ‘affluent professionals’, and most of them have been highly educated. The monthly tuition fees of these two schools are stated in Table 3.1. Both Bradbury and Kingston are mixed-sex schools. All the students are day students (that is, no boarders). Although Bradbury School has a much larger student population and library collection, the average number of books per student is much higher at the Kingston School Library. Key details of the schools and their libraries are shown in Table 3.1.

(Table 3.1) Profiles of Schools Selected								
Schools	School Type	MOI ⁹⁷	Total # of Students	Tuition Fees	Total # of 5 th - & 6 th - Grade Students	Size of Library Collection	# of Items / Students in Library	Hard-Copy Audio-books Available in Library?
Bradbury School	Intel. school (mixed)	English	720	HKD\$5,000 (USD \$641) / month	240 (approx.)	15,000 items	20.8	YES
Kingston School	Intel. school (mixed)	English	197	HKD\$9,000 (US\$1,154) / month	70 (approx.)	8,429 items (for both kindergarten and primary)	53.7	YES (but only around 10 items)

3.3.1. Homepages of the selected schools – the homepages of the two international elementary schools taking part in this research is are available at:

- Bradbury International Elementary School⁹⁸ - Homepage: <http://www.bradbury.edu.hk/>
- Kingston International Elementary School⁹⁹ - Homepage: <http://www.kingston.edu.hk/>

⁹⁶ SAR – Special Administration Region.

⁹⁷ Medium of instruction.

⁹⁸ Bradbury Elementary School is managed under the English School Foundations: <http://www.esf.edu.hk/>

⁹⁹ Kingston Elementary School follows the International Baccalaureate (IB) educational programmes.

3.3.2. 'Tween' - characteristics of study population

This research study focused on the elementary-school students from aged eleven to twelve years old (5th- and 6th-grade students), who are already fluent in English. The two school librarians and I were particularly interested in studying elementary students in this age group. According to the school librarians, students of this age no longer wish to be perceived as children, but they are not yet teenagers either. They are what we know as 'tween' years. The two school librarians and other classroom teachers strongly believe that it is necessary to open up to children the great expanse of possibilities that a healthy reading life could provide. According to the Kingston Librarian, children in this age group are in the process of forming close personal friendships. These friendships revolve around competitive comparisons (especially boys) in all areas of their lives including their families. Popular culture (for example, games, movies, television shows, rock stars) matter a great deal at this time. The Bradbury Librarian also pointed out that students at this age are also developing increased language skills, and often read adult-level magazines and newspapers for information that interest them. Another reason for choosing this specific age group for this research was because both the school librarians and I thought them to be particularly suitable as they are expected to be accustomed to using computers. This was particularly important for this study, as the audio-book resource (NSWL) chosen for this study is operated by online network. Students needed to have basic computer skills in order to gain access to NSWL. Children at this age are also expected to have the ability to fill out simple questionnaires by themselves, under the proper supervision and guidance. Normally, children at this age would routinely use English textbooks in the schools, and as a result, they were considered a good choice of participants suited to both age range and research.

3.4. Research Instruments

There are various factors influencing children's attitudes towards reading and the use of the school library, for example, children's personal experiences in reading, children's confidence in reading, parents' attitudes towards reading, and teachers' ways of teaching or school librarians' ways of helping students find information in the library. As a result, when it came to the design of the research instruments, I worked

closely with the two school librarians for several months to develop different sets of research instruments (outlined below), with the hope of collecting data from multiple perspectives, that is, from the student participants (as direct users of NSWL), also classroom teachers and library staff from the same schools, as well as from parents, with the aim of identifying the factors that influence children's reading practices. The questionnaires and other research instruments designed and used for this study are as follows:

- **Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) Monthly Usage Report**
- **Two sets of self-completed questionnaires for students, administered before and after the introduction of NSWL (the Pre-Questionnaire and Post-Questionnaire)**
- **Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire**
- **Parent Questionnaire**
- **Student focus group interviews**

Details regarding functions and administration of individual questionnaires and instruments developed for this research study are as follows:

3.4.1. Online resource chosen for research – Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) – (<http://www.NaxosSpokenWordLibrary.com>)

This resource is concentrated mostly on American and European literary classics and educational themes. The NSWL's content highlights, interface setup and functionalities are summarized as follows:

3.4.1.1.NSWL's setup and its audio-book recordings

The audio-book recordings inside NSWL usually include a narrator, plot structure, and other essential storytelling items. The NSWL integrates text and audio (such as spoken word, supporting sounds, and background music) and other interactive online functionalities. All these aspects are woven together to tell a rich, multi-sensory story. NSWL's interface is designed in such a way that it allows the reader to 'surf' around the topics and stories in linear, or non-linear modes. The sound effects and background music help to create the mood of the story.

3.4.1.2.NSWL's contents

NSWL audio-books encompass subjects such as music appreciation/education, biographies, religion, sports, great epics and tales, history. All the NSWL audio-book recordings employ professional actors or narrators to tell the stories, and they include some well-known English names, such as Michael Caine, Kenneth Branagh, Paul Scofield, Juliet Stevenson and many others. The narrator infuses the human experience in telling a story presented to the reader visually and virtually through multi-media technology. For NSWL's basic facts and content highlights, please refer to table below (Table 3.2) and Appendix 16.

(Table 3.2) NSWL¹⁰⁰ - Basic Facts & Content Highlights¹⁰¹ <i>(as of September 2006)</i>	
Collection size:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Over 340 titles▪ Over 1,000 hours of spoken word.
Coverage, scope & series included:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Complete Naxos AudioBooks catalogue, plus releases from Naxos Educational.
Number of authors, playwrights & poets represented:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Over 100
Numbers of new releases:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Approx. 30 new titles added automatically annually.
Natures of literature featured:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Many classical novels, plays and poetry, from medieval times to 20th century.▪ Many unabridged titles, from Shakespeare to James Joyce, etc.
Range of literature included :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ adventure books ; biographies ; fables ; fairy tales ; folk tales ; historical fictions ; legends▪ limericks ; mysteries ; myths ; novels ; nursery rhymes ; plays ; science fictions.
Content highlights of Children's & Junior Classic Fictions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Andresen – Fairy Tales</i>▪ <i>One Thousand and One Nights</i>▪ <i>Ballet Stories</i>▪ <i>Peter Pan</i>▪ <i>Secret Garden</i>▪ <i>Robin Hood</i>

3.4.1.3.NSWL's user interface/navigation, setup, functionalities

NSWL contains many well-known children's literature and junior classics. Almost no keyboard skills are required to operate the programme. Readers can rely solely on clicking the mouse to interact with the NSWL. On the screen are pages of a book with the original text and CD cover. In addition, the text is accompanied by a variety of real voices, background music and sound effects. No keyboard skills are required to operate the NSWL interface. NSWL also provides the reader with online

¹⁰⁰ Titles Available inside NSWL - for comprehensive listing of all titles under the *Children's Classics*, *Junior Classic Fiction*, *Junior History*, and *Junior Non-Fiction*, series available inside NSWL (as of September 2007), please refer to (Appendix 16).

¹⁰¹ *About Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL)*. Available from: <http://www.naxosspokenwordlibrary.com/>

assistance features that can be accessed with little effort. Readers can replay the text by clicking the mouse to interact with the book. On the screen are the pages of the book with the original text and illustrations from the original CD cover. The dictionary option is presented by an icon/picture at the bottom of the computer screen. In addition, the text may be accompanied by a variety of real voices, music, and sound effects. With reference to NSWL's audio-book recordings, many of them are a reading of the paper-books of well-known classics, and a great majority of the recordings include background music, with sound effects, providing the effects of an audio movie. Presentations include recordings of full-cast dramatizations, traditional storytelling, interviews and biographies of famous people. Both abridged and unabridged works are available, and most of these book recordings are read by a single narrator, but there are also many full-cast dramatization recordings (both full-sound and multiple readers) that feature a cast of many different actors as story characters. The listener can also use the "pause" button for short lengths of time, when there is a need to delay listening to attend to something else and resume listening where he/she left off. The reader can re-read any page, or have selected sections or the entire story read-aloud. In other words, the young readers can backtrack to check a character's name, go over a difficult (or enjoyable) passage two or three times, or move ahead to see if there is enough time before dinner to finish the chapter. NSWL's major drawback lies in the fact that there are relatively little important contemporary or popular fictions or stories available inside the database. As of September 2006, only 28% of the entire NSWL collection catered especially for the elementary-school level (see Section 5.3). For details on the setup and design of NSWL's user interface, please refer to Appendix 16.

3.4.2. Self-Completed Questionnaires for students (Pre-Questionnaire and Post-Questionnaire)¹⁰²

A self-completion questionnaire was viewed as one of the most direct methods of determining attitudes towards reading from a large group of students. A questionnaire would be quicker and easier than interview or other observation techniques. In addition, questionnaire results would be easily quantifiable compared to other qualitative data. Using this technique, students could respond directly to specific questions in writing (mostly check-boxes). For drawbacks of quantitative data from questionnaire survey, please refer to Section 3.10.2.

The Pre-Questionnaire and Post-Questionnaire¹⁰³ for students consisted mostly of closed-ended questions (check-boxes) and were administered to the students at two different times. The Pre-Questionnaire was administered to the students in October 2006, while the Post-Questionnaire was administered in March 2007. The pre-test and post-test data collected from the two questionnaires served to evaluate and compare students' reading practices and school-library-usage patterns after being exposed to NSWL for a period of five months. Another goal of the questionnaires was to identify various factors that had influenced the amount of reading and the reading interests of these students. Details on Pre- and Post-Questionnaires for the students are as follows:

¹⁰² Notes on Pre-/Post-Questionnaire for Students - the design of the first draft of the Pre- and Post-Questionnaire for the students was modeled after the one used for the *Survey of Secondary School Library in U.K.* in 1999. After discussing with the two school-librarians, it was suggested that some questions needed to be simplified for the elementary-school students. In addition, it was also advised the some colourful pictures/graphics be added to the questionnaires, in order to make it more inviting for the students – and researcher and the two school-librarians arrived at the second draft (see Appendix 2). Another function of the Pre-/Post-Questionnaire for students was to:

- (a) identify whether the library's current collection actually met the tastes and the leisure reading needs of the students. Such data would be most valuable for collection-development purposes.
- (b) identify the actual percentage of students who would actually use the school library voluntarily for leisure reading, and not made mandatory by their teachers.

¹⁰³ Further Notes on Pre-/Post-Questionnaires for Students - when designing the two questionnaires, the researcher and school librarians took the students' young age into consideration. As a result, all questions were kept:

- (a) clear and unambiguous;
- (a) avoided the use of any technical language or language that was inappropriate for the respondents, who were only twelve-year-old children;
- (b) also avoided all double-barreled questions;
- (c) all instructions on how to complete the questionnaire are explicit, and clear;
- (d) since this was a self-complete questionnaire, length and ease of completion had been taken into consideration;
- (e) it should be highlighted that the researcher ensured that he himself or the two teacher-librarians were present in the classroom, when the questionnaires were being filled out to clarify any questions the children had trouble with, given their age;
- (f) the researcher and the two school/teacher librarians also took the time to explain to the young students, to ensure that they all understood the nature of the study, in order to ease their pressure to lie on the questionnaire.

Pre-Questionnaire for Students - the sixteen-item Pre-Questionnaire was administered to all 5th- and 6th-grade students at both Bradbury and Kingston School in October 2006. The Pre-Questionnaire was developed to investigate students' existing library usage and their reading practices, before the students were exposed to NSWL. It collected information on the general characteristics of these students as young readers, including their reading habits, library usage patterns¹⁰⁴, gendered profiles/differences¹⁰⁵ as well as their perceptions¹⁰⁶ of their school libraries, their collections, and facilities, and to identify the different aspects (ranging from environmental to instructional) that might have influenced students' reading practices and motivation. The Pre-Questionnaire is given in Appendix 2. The students answered each questionnaire item by ticking mostly check-boxes (supplemented with a small number of open-ended questions), with answers ranging from "Yes", "No" to "Sometimes" or "Everyday", "Every week" to "Never". These questions included asking the students if they would read books and use the school library for 'fun' after school, and the frequency of reading for 'fun'. As indicated in Appendix 2, the Pre-Questionnaire consisted of the following four parts:

- (A) General Information
- (B) Reading Habits
- (C) The Library and Services Available
- (D) Curriculum and the Library

Post-Questionnaire for Students - the 33-item Post-Questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was administered to the same groups of students at both Bradbury and Kingston

¹⁰⁴ **Usage Patterns:** to investigate whether keen school-library users would also visit the public libraries frequently, and to identify whether there were any direct relationships between the two, for example:

- Students prefer to use the public libraries rather than their own school libraries and why?
- Students only use their own school libraries but never visit the public libraries and why? OR merely reason of convenience?
- Students use neither the school nor public libraries and why?

¹⁰⁵ **Gender Profiles:** during informal discussion with Bradbury School Librarian in December 2005, Mr. Christopher Chan commented that *"In fact, recently I was just discussing with one of the 5th-grade teachers that audio-books are particularly effective in encouraging reading in more reluctant students (usually boys!). I think expanding the library's access to audio resources would be highly beneficial."* As a result, the two School Librarians and I wished to use the Questionnaires to collect data that would assist them to identify practical ideas for library programmes that could actually assist the boys to overcome their cultural and developmental challenges, or stereotyping. In other words, this research also aimed to obtain insights that would help the librarian and teacher colleagues to make vitally needed connections with this underserved population.

¹⁰⁶ **Students' Perceptions:** to identify whether there were any direct relationships between students' perceptions of their own school library and the library's actual usage statistics and patterns, for example:

- Did majority students have a positive image of their own school library?
- If students had positive image of the school library, did they tend to use the library more often?
- If they had negative image of the school library, would they avoid using the library?
- Did library staff need to put efforts to promote a positive image for the Library and the fun of using its services?

School in March 2007. In order to enable valid comparison of the pre- and post-test responses, the Post-Questionnaire included the same set of sixteen questions as in the Pre-Questionnaire - with the aim to record, measure and compare whether and in what direction reading practices had changed amongst the students, being exposed to NSWL five months later. In addition, the Post-Questionnaire included questions on students' experiences as NSWL users (see Appendix 2).

General Information on Number of Pre- and Post-Questionnaires Collected - as mentioned previously, the data collected form the Pre- and Post-Questionnaires were designed to measure and compare students' library-usage rates, patterns, regularity, as well as their reading habits, reading attitudes, reading-material preferences, before and after the introduction of NSWL. The purpose of this was to measure the extent of NSWL's effectiveness in motivating students to read on their own after school by comparing the data collected from the Pre- and Post-Questionnaires regarding students' overall library-usage patterns. The questionnaire-survey respondents were aged between ten to twelve (all 5th- and 6th-grade students from Bradbury and Kingston School). Apart from a small number of children absent because of illness, all 5th- and 6th-grade students were required to take part in this questionnaire survey. The Pre- and Post-Questionnaires were filled out by the students during their library lesson, under the direct supervision of the two school librarians. All the completed questionnaires were collected from students before the library lessons ended. The total number of eligible students to attend the library lessons was **310**. The total number of completed Pre-Questionnaire collected was **292**; and the total number of Post-Questionnaires collected was **260**. The lower number of completed Post-Questionnaires collected was due mainly to a small number of absentees in March 2007 (see Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5).

(Table 3.3) Student Respondents & Number of Questionnaires Collected				
Schools	Pre-Questionnaire ¹⁰⁷		Post-Questionnaire ¹⁰⁸	
	%	Total # collected	%	Total # collected
Bradbury	77.1	225	83	216
Kingston	22.9	67	17	44
Total	100.0	292	100	260

¹⁰⁷ Administered and collected in October 2006.

¹⁰⁸ Administered and collected in March 2007.

(Table 3.4) Student Respondents & Gender Distribution				
Gender	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	%	Total # collected	%	Total # collected
Girl	44.9	131	45.4	118
Boy	55.1	161	54.6	142
Total (Boys + Girls)	100.0	292	100.0	260

(Table 3.5) Ratio Between Boy & Girl Respondents	
Pre-Questionnaire	1 (girl) : 1.2 (boys)
Post-Questionnaire	1 (girl) : 1.2 (boys)

3.4.3. NSWL Monthly Usage Report

An electronic monthly usage report generated directly from the NSWL software, featuring statistical data described the overall monthly usage activities amongst the Bradbury and Kingston students for quantitative comparison, for example, different login times, dates, usage frequencies, various audio-book titles being listened to by the students each month. The data contained in the *NSWL Monthly Usage Report* was primarily quantitative and provided another view on NSWL’s actual usage rates (see Section 5.2).

3.4.4. Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire – (administered at both Bradbury and Kingston School in March 2007)

The Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire contained questions that sought to document classroom teachers’ and school-library staff’s views on the overall contents, user-interface navigation (user-friendliness), and other added/interactive features of NSWL provided to the students. Student respondents were asked their opinions on the effects of the provision of NSWL had on young readers’ motivation in a primary-school-library setting, for example, how these students relate to, and learn from NSWL, as compared to what they would learn from a paper-book. A total number of six completed Teacher/Librarian Questionnaires were collected. (see Appendix 3 for the questionnaire).

3.4.5. Parent Questionnaire – (administered in March 2007)

The Parent Questionnaire was co-designed with the two school librarians. It featured both open- and closed-ended questions. The aim of the Parent Questionnaire was to

investigate parents' views towards NSWL regarding its efficacy in enhancing their children's overall literacy development, as well as children's reading practices in the home environment during their free time (see Appendix 4 for the questionnaire). The results were that a total number of six completed Parent Questionnaires were collected.

3.4.6. Student focus group interviews

The questionnaire surveys mentioned above were primarily quantitative in nature. Supplementing these surveys were two focus group interviews conducted amongst students from both schools (made up of four students in one school and three students in the other). The purpose of these focus group interviews was to enable me to explore and to develop further understanding of students' perspectives on NSWL, their own school library, as well as other issues related to their reading practices and school-library usage. By asking probing questions, greater details could be extracted from the participants than could be possible through the questionnaires.

The two focus interviews were conducted near the end of the study (end of March 2007). The two school librarians were responsible for selecting participants to take part in these interviews. It was decided that participants should be a mix of high- and low-frequency users of NSWL, and of boys and girls, in order to generate greater range of responses, as students participants could develop, challenge and suggest new ideas and react to different viewpoints during the course of the student focus group interview. Both high- and low-NSWL users were identified by the two school librarians based on their usage frequencies, as well as their level of interest demonstrated in using the online resource. Finally, a total number of four (three boys and one girl) students were selected for the Bradbury School group interview; while three girls were selected from the Kingston School group interview. Details and results regarding the student focus group interviews are given in Sections 4.4 and 5.6.

3.5. Research Schedule and Data-Collection Procedures

The research schedule and details regarding data-collection procedures are as follows:

(Table 3.6) Research Schedule and Data-Collection Procedures		
Date/Time:	Actions:	Responsible Person(s):
Summer 2006	Jointly designed the research methodologies and finalized the different sets of questionnaire for this research.	School Librarians & Researcher
Mid-October 2006	Pre-Questionnaire for Students - administered to all the 5 th - and 6 th -grade students at Bradbury and Kingston School during their library class time.	School Librarians
November 2006	Online audio-book resource - the chosen/subscribed online audio-book resource (NSWL) was launched at the libraries of both Bradbury and Kingston School.	School Librarians
November 2006 – March 2007 <i>(regular basis)</i>	Notifying and working with parents ¹⁰⁹ - seeking parental support - parents were notified by the school-librarians about the about the availability of the online audio-book resources (NSWL) provided to their children via email notifications regularly (see Appendices 9, 12 and 14).	School Librarians & Parents
November 2006 – March 2007	Collaborating amongst classroom teachers and school-librarians ¹¹⁰ – classroom teachers and school-librarians worked together to develop strategies to integrate the use of NSWL into the regular curricula.	Classroom Teachers & School Librarians <i>(comments from researchers also incorporated)</i>
November 2006 - March 2007 <i>(monthly)</i>	Reading incentive programmes – <i>Naxos Spoken Word Library Reading Competition</i> – to be implemented at Bradbury School Library.	School Librarians & Classroom Teachers

¹⁰⁹ **Notes on Working with Parents:** since parents of the children have more direct and more frequent contact with the classroom teachers than they do with the librarians, all the parents were encouraged to visit the library homepage with their children together, and on their own, to access NSWL remotely from home. The school librarians also provided online tips on helping parents choose NSWL titles for the children, and encouraged them to use the NSWL to connect the parents with the children at home. Parents were also encouraged to make positive contributions and suggestions to the librarians about their children's education and reading via email directly.

¹¹⁰ Classroom teachers and the librarians worked together to encourage the use of NSWL by identifying different literary works from NSWL for the students could supplementing their teaching, while at the same time, serving as inspiration and models for children's own writing, with the aim to support the students' independent reading and individual and classroom enquiries.

March 2007 (5 months after launch of NSWL)	Post-Questionnaire for Students – administered to the same group of students to enquire about their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ changes in reading habits; ▪ changes in library usage patterns ▪ user experience with NSWL provided. 	School Librarians
March 2007	Questionnaire for Teachers and Librarians – administered to both classroom teachers and school library staff at Bradbury and Kingston to enquire about their opinions on NSWL and its effectiveness as an educational tool.	School Librarians & Researcher
End of March 2007	Data analysis and comparison of results – employed the Microsoft Office Excel software to compare and analyze the data collected from the following questionnaires completed by students, teachers, librarians and parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-Questionnaire (for students) ▪ Post-Questionnaire (for students) ▪ Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire ▪ Parent Questionnaires 	Researcher
April 2007	Student focus group interviews – made up of 2 groups, one in each school. The focus group interviews were conducted by the researcher at the two school libraries to probe for clarification and details for enhancing the completeness of the data collected.	Researcher (facilitated by School librarians)
May 2007	Recommendations – based on the study results, recommendations were made for the overall improvements of library services, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ future acquisitions of additional online and audio resources for enriching existing library collection. ▪ further cooperative reading incentive programmes between classroom teachers and school librarians. ▪ future researches for other school-teacher librarians in this area. 	School Librarians & Researcher

3.6. NSWL Reading Incentive Programmes

With the aim of promoting the use of NSWL during the research period, reading incentive programmes centering on the use of NSWL were co-developed by the two school librarians together with me. The rationale behind these reading incentive programmes was that in order to measure the amount of true voluntary reading

undertaken by the students, we wanted to attract as many students to try out this newly available online resource as possible without making the listening task mandatory for the students as part of their assignments. However, in order to ensure having an adequate number of participants to participate in this experiment, strategies were developed with the school librarians to encourage the students to try out NSWL. The format and scale of the reading incentive programmes launched at Bradbury and Kingston School varied, as they were determined by the amount of resources and person-power available at each school library (see Sections 3.6.1. and 3.6.2 for NSWL reading incentive programmes launched at Bradbury and Kingston School).

3.6.1. *NSWL Competition* at Bradbury School

The Bradbury School Librarian selected an audio-book title for this *NSWL Competition* on a bi-monthly basis. The Bradbury Librarian also developed sets of questions particularly for each *NSWL Competition* - to evaluate students' understanding of the chosen audio-book title. One prize was presented to the best entry for the *NSWL Competition*. If more than one entry scored 100% on the comprehension questions, the winner would be determined by the 'tie-breaker' question. There was no real correct answer to the tie-breaker. The Bradbury School Librarian would judge who had provided the most thoughtful or insightful answer to the question. The winner was presented with a certificate, and an audio CD in front of the whole school, as a prize and recognition of achievement, and encouragement. This *NSWL Competitions* were open to all 5th- and 6th-grade students at Bradbury School, and all their parents were also notified about this school event via the regular electronic newsletter in e-mail form. According to the Bradbury School Librarian, over ten entries were received in the first (December 2006/January 2007) and the second (February/March 2007) *NSWL Competition*. A total number of two CD prizes and certificates were presented to the two winners. Given the positive feedback and support received from both parents and the Bradbury School Management, as well as the active participation from the students, this *NSWL Competition* would continue to be held even after the research period, (that is, until the end of the school year in July 2007). For details of the *NSWL Competition* Announcement, and *NSWL Competition* Entry Form (featuring questions developed for individual *Competition*), please refer to Appendices 10 and 11.

3.6.2. Kingston School Library – NSWL Listening Worksheet

Given the limited person-power available at the Kingston School Library (unlike Bradbury, the Kingston School Library does not employ a library assistant to assist in managing the daily operations), Kingston School Library designed a very simple and easy-to-fill-out NSWL Worksheet that required minimal effort for administration, as well as little effort for the students to complete (see Appendix 15). Students were only required to write down their names, class, and the date and time that they used NSWL, as well as the audio-book titles. Students were also asked to rate the audio-book by choosing one of the following icons given on the Worksheet, for example:

☺ = *Good, I like the book.*

☹ = *Average, the book is OK.*

☹ = *No, I dislike the book.*

With reference to the reading incentive programme prizes, Kingston Elementary School Library also received the same donation (same number of five titles and same number (fifteen) of audio CDs) from Naxos Digital Services, Ltd. for supporting their reading incentive programme. Any Kingston students who submitted a completed NSWL Listening Worksheet would be awarded a Naxos CD. As of April 2007, a total number of four completed NSWL Worksheets were received from four different Kingston 6th-grade girls. Finally, the Kingston School Library decided to add the remaining Naxos CDs as new titles to the school library – for enriching its audio-visual collection, as well as for regular circulation for the students (see Appendix 15 for a sample of the NSWL Worksheet designed by the Kingston School Librarian).

3.6.3. *NSWL Competition* and NSWL Listening Worksheet prize details

As mentioned in the previous sections (Sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2, a total number of five titles of Naxos-label audio CDs (three copies of each title) were donated by Naxos Digital Services, Ltd. as the Bradbury *NSWL Competition* and the Kingston NSWL Listening Worksheet programme prizes, and all CD titles belonged to the children and junior literature category, and the details are as follows:

- *Peter and the Wolf*
- *Cinderella*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Carnival of the Animals*
- *Nutcracker*

3.7. Criteria for Measuring Effectiveness

Voluntary reading in school was said to be one of the most powerful tools in the area of literacy education.¹¹¹ Shapiro and White (1991) found that students who attended the school library for two periods a day for free independent and shared reading experiences expressed higher levels of reading pleasure than those who participated in traditional reader instruction. They also found that library use as a child was a major factor in encouraging reading. Classroom libraries, school bookclubs, and teachers allowing free-reading time to take place in the schools were also major factors contributing to the development of positive reading attitudes.¹¹²

Since these home and library factors were closely related to students' reading habits and reading-material preferences, it was decided that the criteria for measuring the NSWL's effectiveness would be based on comparison of pre and post school-library usage; reading quantity, and students' ratings of NSWL, as well as other quantifiable factors related to their literacy developments. Specifically, the research explored whether there might be any:

- increase in the number of students borrowing books out of the school library to read in their spare time;
- increase in the number of students using the school library for 'fun' and leisure;
- increase in the use of paper-books amongst the students;
- increase in the frequency of students borrowing books from the school library to read in their spare time; and
- increase in the percentage of students who listen to NSWL for 'pleasure' after school.

¹¹¹ KRASHEN, S. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited.

¹¹² SHAPIRO, J. and W. WHITE (1991) "Reading Attitudes and Perceptions in Traditional and Nontraditional Reading Programs." *Reading Research and Instruction*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 52-66.

3.8. Parental Support

Because parental support is so crucial in encouraging the students to make use of NSWL after school, all the parents were contacted by email with information about their children's reading homework with NSWL. This information included telling the parents that "the more children read, the better they will do in school", and they were encouraged to help their children choose different online books from NSWL to read at home together with their children (see Appendices 12, 13 and 14).

3.9. Validity and Reliability of Research Data

Validity refers to the reasons we have for believing truth claims, what Dewey called "warranted assertibility".¹¹³ These truth claims may take the form of statements of facts, descriptions, accounts, propositions, generalizations, inferences, interpretations, judgments or arguments. Irrespective of their form, what is important is why we believe the things that we do and how we justify the claims we make.¹¹⁴ Examination of trustworthiness is crucial. Validity and reliability provide not only confidence in data collected, but also trust in the successful application and use of the results. For assuring the validity and reliability of this research study, I adopted the following techniques for designing the research instruments, as well as for analyzing the data collected.

3.9.1. Multiple methods/triangulation

For this study, I used triangulation of several data sources and their interpretations. A combination of questionnaire surveys, student focus group interviews, and audio recordings were used to achieve more valid, reliable and diverse construction of realities. In other words, I sought to build up a complex picture over the same event or to report on the same phenomena via the use of multiple sources of data for enhancing credibility.

¹¹³ PHILIPS, D.C. (1987) "Validity and Qualitative Research: Why the Worry About Warrant Will Not Wane." *Education and Urban Society*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 9-24.

¹¹⁴ NORRIS, Nigel. (1997) "Error, Bias and Validity in Qualitative Research." *Educational Action Research*. Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 172.

3.9.2. Reliability and credibility

As realities could be interpreted in multiple ways, I involved the two school librarians in data collection throughout this research study. In addition, as a standard procedure, I systematically engaged them in approving, interpreting, as well as exploring and explaining all the research findings when forming themes in this study. I believed that this standard procedure (triangulation technique) would minimize my bias, as well as increase the truthfulness of a proposition about the certain phenomenon regarding students' behaviours. The two school librarians in this study, who also served as peer researchers, also believed that the use of this peer debriefing technique, such as involving them in the approval and interpretation during the stage of data analysis, was effective in fostering reliability and credibility. In addition, as a researcher I always ensured that there were agreements amongst us on the evaluation or analysis criteria and interpretations when measuring the same phenomenon simultaneously. In other words, I continually communicated with the two school librarians about methodological decisions throughout the course of this study. However, the responsibility for the overall design and substantive conclusions are mine.

3.9.3. Sample size

For measuring the effectiveness of the chosen online audio resource's as learning tool, I solicited the widest range of perspectives possible. That is, in addition to having included all 5th- and 6th-grade students from both Bradbury and Kingston School to respond to the questionnaire surveys during their library lesson (the total number of eligible students to attend the library lessons was 310; with a total number of 292 completed Pre-Questionnaires and 260 completed Post-Questionnaires collected), I also co-designed two other questionnaires with the two school librarians - to enquire from the parents and the school library staff their views on NSWL in relations to the students' reading practices. Whereas for the two focus group interviews, they made up of four students in one school (Bradbury Elementary School) and three students in the other (Kingston Elementary School). With reference to the teacher/librarian and parent questionnaire surveys, all classroom teachers and parents were invited to take part in the questionnaire survey via email – in March 2007, a total number of six completed Teacher/Librarian Questionnaires and six completed Parent Questionnaires were collected.

3.9.4. Questionnaire surveys

As noted above, the questionnaires (Pre- and Post-Questionnaires; Parent Questionnaire; Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire) were co-designed with the two school librarians. Before administering the survey instruments, the two school librarians and a Naxos Digital Services, Ltd. Representative were involved in scrutinizing the validity of the questionnaire items in order to check for issues around students' capability. The Pre- and Post-Questionnaires were completed by the student respondents during their library class, under the close supervision of the school-library staff. When the questionnaires were administered to the students, the school-library staff also took time to explain individual questionnaire items, in order to avoid students having difficulties understanding the questions or instructions because of various literacy or language issues.

3.9.5. Pre- and Post-Questionnaire pilot tests

Pilot studies were undertaken for testing the questionnaire items. The questioning structures before the Pre- and Post-Questionnaire were actually administered to the student respondents at both Bradbury and Kingston School. The results from these pilots were compared with the final research findings to ensure consistency and parallelism.

3.9.6. Student focus group interviews

With reference to the focus group interviews with students as NSWL users, although the data generated were purely qualitative in nature, they were helpful in establishing the reliability of the questionnaire survey findings (dominant data collection method for this study). More importantly, they added depth and richness to the understanding of student's reading practices and other related behaviours. While the questionnaire surveys were attributed the 'dominant method' status, this did not mean that the student focus group interviews and resultant data were any less valuable.

3.9.7. Chosen online audio resource (NSWL) and usage frequencies

The monthly usage reports generated by the Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) database were used to measure usage frequencies. These data were felt to be more accurate than student responses, which would be subject to recall error. However, there were also limitations in this data-gathering technique. Such limitations were

caused by the fact that the NSWL software was unable to generate data on the duration of individual login sessions at the time of the research. It was therefore not possible to examine the distribution of durations across different login sessions, for example, to calculate quantities such as the standard deviation and skewness. Whether individual login sessions belonged to the same or different users also could not be determined in the research period. As a result, information on students' actual usage frequencies was limited in what we could obtain from the *NSWL Monthly Usage Report*, generated automatically from the NSWL software programme.

3.9.8. Retention of original research data

Finally, the original Pre- and Post-Questionnaires filled out by students, questionnaire survey raw data, observation field notes, written transcriptions and the audiotapes from the student focus group interviews were all retained and available for inspection (for checking the quality of the findings and interpretations) and re-analysis by the two school librarians as well as by others if required.

3.10. Research Limitations and Other Technical Constraints

As with all research, this study has certain limitations that need to be taken into account when considering the study and its contributions. The quality of the research, such as validity and reliability of research data, have already been discussed in the previous section (Section 3.9). However, some of these limitations can be seen as fruitful avenues for future research under the same theme. The major limitation of this research study lies in its methodological design. The lack of a control group in this context has made it impossible to determine whether any pre- and post-NSWL changes in the reading habits amongst students were due to NSWL or other factors, for example, maturation (the students getting older) and testing (students being asked about their reading may have sensitized them). The competitions may also have contributed to a change in behaviour. The reading incentive programmes implemented at the two school sites may also have contributed to a change in behaviour (such as, reading practices and reading-material preferences) amongst students.

As mentioned in Section 3.6, the two school libraries had developed and implemented different levels and formats of incentive programmes to encourage their students to use NSWL. This was caused by the different amount of person-power and resources available at each school site. Although the students selected from these two schools were of the same age group, the different incentive programmes could lead to different intensities of interest and levels of participation in using NSWL, and thereby causing incompatible learning outcomes and usage frequencies amongst the study population. For example, the final results indicated that the reading incentive programme, *NSWL Competition*, launched at the Bradbury School led to certain titles of audio-books being more widely used than other titles of the same section/category inside NSWL. On the other hand, Kingston School made no such efforts in highlighting or suggesting any particular NSWL titles to the students to read during the research period. Kingston School's reading incentive programme depended mainly on students' efforts to look for their own desired audio-book titles to read. Other limitations encountered during this research study are outlined in the following sections.

3.10.1. Study population and sample size

With reference to the study population, first of all, the sample size was considered small, and the data gathered from questionnaires was essentially quantitative in nature. Due to the limited resources available, this research study was confined to two international elementary schools in Hong Kong only. If this research study had been extended to other international schools or other local schools that use English as the main medium of instruction, a somewhat more diverse overall picture may have emerged. Furthermore, the questionnaire surveys did not provide opportunity to probe individual respondents/students to elaborate on their answers. Secondly, since the sample came from only 5th- and 6th-grade students of two international schools in Hong Kong, the sample was not selected at random. Furthermore, the study sample contained a homogeneous group of students coming from a similar socio-economic background. Thirdly, given the students' young age, it was difficult to obtain their informed consent, as they were vulnerable to manipulation. It was also difficult to ensure that all students had a good understanding of the nature of the study, given their young age, and they might feel pressured to lie on the questionnaire.

3.10.2. Questionnaire surveys on students

It was difficult to design questions that were easy and simple for these elementary-school students to answer, but at the same time could satisfy the school librarians' and the researcher's aims in collecting as much data as possible. Given the students' young age, I had to work closely with the two school librarians, to ensure that all the questionnaire items could be easily understood by the students. Before collecting the completed student questionnaires, the two school librarians also needed to double-check all the questionnaires, to ensure that all items had been answered. In addition, since the two school librarians were dealing with over 290 students, it was simply not possible to ensure all the students would return on the same day to fill out the Post-Questionnaire during the library class. There were bound to be absentees amongst the student participants at both schools each day. For the questionnaire surveys, the two school librarians also needed to constantly remind themselves to use the same set of vocabularies when explaining the questionnaire items to the students, so that all student participants could arrive at a common understanding when answering the questionnaires. In addition, when measuring students' attitudes via the use of questionnaires, their responses recorded on the questionnaires on an attitude scale could reflect many things. For example, it might only reflect the way the students felt at a given time.

3.10.3. Student focus group interviews

It was difficult to maintain a high level of objectivity when comprehending and interpreting the qualitative data collected from the student focus group interviews.¹¹⁵ Secondly, certain student participants were more outspoken than others. Occasionally, their strong opinions and outspoken attitudes tended to overwhelm or influence the others in the same focus group. Furthermore, it was also difficult to encourage the student participants to be as frank, and as outspoken as possible during the student focus group interviews, and at the same time avoid getting sidetracked. Moreover, students' perceptions or responses could be influenced by how he/she was expected to feel by others who were important to him/her, such as their peers' presence at same interview, as well as outside pressures competing for first place in his/her thinking at the time.

¹¹⁵ MARSHALL, Catherine and ROSSMAN, Gretchen B. (1995) *Designing Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, pp. 81.

3.10.4. Online Audio-book resource selected for this study

With regard to the online audio resource chosen for this study, there were relatively little important contemporary or popular fiction or stories available inside the database, and the selection of book titles was limited to what was available inside NSWL. As a result, these findings cannot be generalized to the printed version of the same title. Without direct supervision from the school librarians and school teachers, it was difficult to find out about how the students and their parents would actually use NSWL after school in their own homes. Finally, the time allocated for this research was only a five-month period, producing only a snapshot of how two groups of students interact with NSWL. This might have been sufficient length to show the significant results. The time and person-power constraints did not permit me to perform regular onsite observations and recordings of the children engaged in the use of NSWL.

3.10.5. Technical Limitations and constraints concerning the chosen online audio resource (NSWL)

Technical constraint, issue A - data regarding the duration of individual login sessions was unavailable at the time of the research. According to Naxos Digital Services, Ltd., the average login time was calculated based on the total number of login time divided by the number of sessions each month. Naxos Digital Services, Ltd. considered adding this function to the NSWL software as a future enhancement, and such request would only be made available if requested by a large number of NSWL subscribers.

Technical constraint, issue B – there was online access to NSWL for Kingston from mid-February to mid-March 2007 – this was caused by network failure happened at the Kingston School site. Finally, the problem of system failure was resolved in mid-March 2007. NSWL usage was seriously discouraged by this incident in February and March 2007. There was no sign of Kingston students accessing NSWL from mid-February until early April 2007 (that is, after the Easter school break). As a result, Kingston's monthly usage statistics for February and March 2007 were therefore excluded when calculating the overall month average.

3.11. Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct

In order to protect the welfare and the best interests of the student respondents and the reputations of the two schools involved in this study, several ethical and professional conduct issues were taken into serious consideration when designing this study since its beginning. For example, this study had received formal approval from both the Bradbury School and Kingston School to conduct the study in their school libraries. In addition, as the key researcher, I also obtained consent from the school headmasters, and the school librarians, before publishing or presenting the study's findings.

In order to enforce the protection of student-respondent confidentiality and privacy, it was mutually agreed amongst that only the two schools (Bradbury and Kingston School) and I (the key researcher) will have full ownership of the research data. As a result, all the data collected for the research study, including the students-respondent lists, the student and parent-questionnaire-survey data, as well as all the comments collected from the two student focus group interviews were and will be kept completely confidential and private, and would therefore not embarrass or in other ways harm the student and parent respondents. Finally, during the actual research period, I also kept my promise not to intrude on students' normal learning, as well as their lives outside the research, whilst disruptions of the classes during the research were kept to minimal.

3.12. Statement of Key Roles and Responsibilities

Since this research study involved multiple parties (Principle Researcher/author, school librarians, Naxos representatives) for the data collection and analysis, this section aims to provide the *reader* with a *clear understanding* of the roles and responsibilities of all people involved in this research study:

Principle Researcher/Author -- as the Principle Researcher of this research study and the author of this dissertation, my role and responsibilities included the following:

- initiating this research study, as well as designing the project's overall framework/scope.
- in addition to identifying *the* research subjects (the two school sites (Kingston and Bradbury School) and online audio-book resource (NSWL)), I was also responsible for developing the key concepts as well as formulating the research questions for this study.
- completing the research study and keeping the project on schedule, as well as ensuring satisfactory progress was being made; that is, including ensuring all usable data were produced in a timely manner.
- for the purpose of data collection and analysis, maintaining a close working relationship and ongoing communication with the two school librarians and the Naxos representatives throughout the course of this research study.
- to facilitate regular peer reviews with the school librarians in order to ensure that this research study reflected valid interpretations of all results collected.

School Librarians -- the primary role and responsibilities of the two school librarians was to:

- administering the Pre- and Post-Questionnaire to the students at the two school sites as well as administering the Parent- and Teacher-Questionnaire to both parents and teaching staff.
- identifying student participants for the two focus group interviews.
- assisting in analyzing and interpreting the data collected from all the questionnaires, student focus group interviews, and the NSWL monthly usage reports. In addition, recording and providing day-to-day information on students' in and after-school activities in order to enable the Principle

Researcher to have enough background information, as well as to apply appropriate criteria for data interpretation.

- designing and implementing their own reading incentive programmes for introducing NSWL to the students (see Section 3.6).

Naxos Representatives -- the primary role and responsibilities of the Naxos representatives included the following:

- setting up NSWL online user accounts for the two school sites.
- NSWL software troubleshooting, if necessary.
- generating the monthly usage reports from the NSWL software programme, and submitting them to the Principle Researcher and the school librarians via email accordingly.
- providing updated project information on NSWL to the Principle Researcher and the two school librarians.

3.13. Conclusion to Chapter 3

In this chapter, I have presented detailed and complete accounts of the methodology and research strategies according to the conduct and requirements of this study: that is, including all research instrumentations (questionnaires, student focus group interviews, the selected online audio-book resource, *NSWL Monthly Usage Report*), characteristics of study population, as well as detailed summaries of research schedule and data-collection procedures. I placed this study in both quantitative and qualitative camps via utilizing a mixture of survey and focus-group-interview approaches. I have also explained why and how I interoperated the two quantitative and qualitative methods so as to achieve the research objectives.

In summary, it was believed that the integrated quantitative and qualitative approach to developing and evaluating the complex and intricate interventions between students' reading practices, use of the school libraries, and their interactions with NSWL would lead to more effective, insightful and generalizable research results. I had been careful in the preparatory stage and went through lengthy studies, online discussions and face-to-face workgroup meetings with the two school librarians before conducting the actual questionnaire surveys and the student focus group meetings, with the hope that the selected methods and implementation procedures would not only complement one another, but also reveal the most reliable data. While resources in terms of person-power and time were limited, the student focus group interviews were limited to a selective group of students, and the duration of this research study was limited to a period of five months. With this in mind, in the following two chapters (Chapter 4 and 5), I will give detailed account on the analysis, interpretation and comparisons of all data collected throughout the course of this study.

CHAPTER 4

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL LIBRARY AND READING MOTIVATION – ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FROM STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

4.1. Introduction

So far, I have argued that reading is not only a basic literacy skill in a modern world, but it is also a skill that can deliver enormous pleasure to readers through opening up new ways of seeing the world, the world of the imaginary, the world of possibilities. However, the occasion and motivation to read are being eclipsed by competing opportunities for engaging the minds of young people. The question that this dissertation set out to examine was whether the two practices - access to libraries as opening up new opportunities to read, and the use of ICTs in reading in the form of audio-books - might also create a unique space and opportunity to stimulate and enhance students' reading experience. This chapter sets out to report on the overall directions of changes amongst students' reading practices and school-library usage following the introduction of Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL).

This chapter is made up of four distinct, but related parts (Sections 4.2 to 4.5). The first data-reporting section (Section 4.2) presents the overall changes in school-library usage, environment and reading practices of the overall student population, based on the results from the Pre- and Post-Questionnaire surveys. The second section (Section 4.3) presents data on gendered comparisons with the aim to identify whether there were any differences in the reading practices and the school-library usage between boys and girls, following the introduction of NSWL. In order to advance an understanding of what sense to make of the student questionnaire survey data, in the final data-reporting section (Section 4.4), I will further interrogate students' reading practices by drawing on the qualitative results from the two student focus group interviews carried out at the two school sites. I now share the results from the questionnaire surveys and the student interviews.

4.2. Overall Changes in Students' School-Library Usage, Environment and Reading Practices before and after the Introduction of NSWL

This section reports on the results from Sections A to D of the Pre- and Post-Questionnaires (see Appendix 2). I describe, compare and interpret all major changes amongst students' overall school-library usage, environment and students' reading practices. In addition, for the data analysis and interpretations, I interviewed the two school librarians for their views in an attempt to identify the possible causes of such changes in the relationships between gendered distribution, regularity and nature of library visits, following the introduction of NSWL to their school library curricula. In the following sections (Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.3) I will give details of the pre- and post-NSWL comparison of the students' overall school-library usage and reading practices, including the regularity and nature of their school-library visits (for 'work' versus 'fun'), as well as alternatives or solutions that students took when they had problems locating books or information in the school library.

4.2.1. Overall Changes in usage frequencies and nature of library visits amongst students

The Pre- and Post-Questionnaire item 2, *How often do you visit the school library?* (see Table 4.1) set out to measure and compare changes in frequency amongst students using the school library after being exposed to NSWL five months later. In addition to providing reading materials targeted towards formal curriculum needs, it is also essential for the school library to be seen as a place for 'pleasure reading' or 'personal pursuits' amongst the students. We librarians and educators must continue to refine our research instruments and continue to assess the different factors that might be influential to our students' reading motivation and learning incentives. Frequency of library use serves as a good indicator for determining the amount of reading carried out by the students. The results indicated that NSWL had little influence on motivating the students to use the school library more frequently. Indeed, five months later, the frequency of students using the school library daily had in fact decreased. Interviews with the school librarians revealed that NSWL may not be the major contributing factor to the decline in library usage amongst students. The small increase in the number of students using the library weekly was thought to be caused mainly by the weekly scheduled library-skill lessons, which were made part of the regular school curricula, and mandatory for all 5th- and 6th-grade students to attend,

and did not necessarily mean that the students were taking the initiative to use the school library for ‘pleasure’ weekly. For the same reason, the school library staff witnessed a major decline in the number of students using the library daily and the number of students who claimed to have “Never” visited the school library had in fact dropped to zero (see Table 4.1).

(Table 4.1) (A) General Information			
2.	How often do you visit school library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n = 292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Daily	19.0	8.6
	Weekly	67.1	69.8
	Monthly	4.2	7.5
	Once/term	0.7	3.9
	Annually	0.3	0.4
	Never	0.7	0.0
	Cannot remember	8.0	9.8

School library as a place for ‘work’ versus ‘fun’

Another important function of the school library is to support wider reading interests and to encourage independent reading for personal enjoyment. Questionnaire item 13, *Do you use the library for fun?* was designed to enquire whether students would use the school library for informal purposes. The Post-Questionnaire survey results indicated that the percentage of students who used the library for “Fun” had decreased by 2.3 percentage points (50.9% pre-NSWL and 48.6% post-NSWL). In other words, NSWL as an innovation did not have any major effect on motivating more students to use the library for voluntary reading. Interviews with the school librarians revealed that these small statistical changes might be related to the fact that an increasing amount of additional learning and extra-curricular activities were being organized at both school libraries, compared to five months ago. Taking Bradbury School as an example, in addition to the *NSWL Reading Competition* (see Section 3.6.1), another major annual after-school event entitled, *Battle of the Book Competition* also recently took place at the school library on 26th and 27th March 2007, and it was mandatory for all 5th- and 6th-grade students to participate. Several practice sessions were also held at the school library for preparing the students for this *Competition*. Furthermore, in addition to their usual weekly library-skill lessons, students were also encouraged to visit the library to research for information (not necessarily for homework) for other

extra-curricular assignments assigned by other teaching staff of various disciplines. All these could have caused a decrease of free time and a disinclination amongst the students to use the school library for ‘pleasure reading’ or other ‘fun’ use. It was therefore concluded that NSWL failed to motivate more students to use the library more often for ‘fun’ or ‘pleasure’ reading. The results reflected that some students had ceased to view the school library as a place for leisure activities. Instead, they began to see the school library as another ‘classroom’ for supporting their curriculum needs and formal learning.

Why students preferred asking friends rather than school librarians when having trouble finding information?

The school librarian provides instructional interventions to guide students in locating and access the information they need. Questionnaire item 4, *What do you usually do if you are having trouble finding a book or information?* attempted to examine students’ library-searching practices (see Table 4.2). The aim of this question was to identify how much the students actually valued the role of the school librarian’s instructions, as well as how independent they were in terms of information seeking.

(Table 4.2) (A) General Information			
4.	What do you usually do if you are having trouble finding books or information?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Ask the librarian	46.8	31.3
	Browse shelves until I find something useful	14.7	12.5
	Check library computer catalogue	36.0	34.6
	Give up	2.4	2.4
	Ask a friend ¹¹⁶	0.0	19.1

Given that five months had passed since the Pre-Questionnaire, students were getting older and show greater maturity in the ways they sought information. The addition of the extra question/response option, *Ask[ing] a friend* on the Post-Questionnaire was designed to respond to the growth and changes in students’ level of independence in terms of problem solving and information seeking. Given the response options in the Post-Questionnaire had changed, students’ pre- and post-NSWL responses in question item 4 could not be used for comparison. However, it should be noted that the Post-

¹¹⁶ Ask a Friend – newly added category on Post-Questionnaire.

Questionnaire recorded that 19.1% of students preferred asking a friend (see Table 4.2). According to the school librarians' explanations:

Kingston Librarian: *"Students generally prefer to ask friends instead of the teaching staff may be related to the fact that at Bradbury School, there are too many students and just one library teacher teaching the whole class of twenty to thirty students. By comparison, at Kingston, we have a much smaller student population. In addition, unlike the other local Chinese schools, the Kingston students are supposed to be risk-takers and inquirers, and in this international school, teachers' authority is not that powerful as in the other local schools in Hong Kong. Hence, students are never afraid to ask us teachers any sort of questions."*

Bradbury Librarian: *"I think the most likely cause of the observed increase in students asking friends is simply that they are older. They are encouraged to rely less on the teacher to guide them as they progress through the school."*

Based on the results from the questionnaire survey and the comments given by the school librarians, it was concluded that by 5th- and 6th-grade, students are maturing, and becoming more independent and self-learners. At the same time, the school librarians also expected the students to be less reliant on the library staff when it came to information seeking in the second half of the school semester. In addition, given the high student-teacher ratio at Bradbury School, it was not surprising to find a majority of students preferred to ask their friends, when facing difficulty in finding information at the school library.

Changes in frequencies amongst students borrowing books in spare time

As mentioned in Section 2.3, in addition to formal informational instructions, the school library also played an important role connecting students to books they liked to read. As a result, students' book-borrowing rates could serve as a good indicator in determining the amount of 'pleasure' reading being carried out by the students. Questionnaire item 6, *How often do you borrow books from the school library to read in your spare time/at home?* sought to investigate the changes in the frequencies amongst students borrowing books from school library to read in their spare time (see Table 4.3).

(Table 4.3) (B) Reading Habits/Practices			
6.	How often do you borrow books from school library to read in your spare time at home?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Daily	21.5	10.9
	Weekly	60.2	56.8
	Monthly	7.7	11.3
	Once/term	0.7	2.7
	Annually	0.4	0.0
	Never	0.7	3.5
	Cannot remember	8.8	14.8

The questionnaire survey results indicated that there was a decrease in the number of students checking books out from the school library to read daily, and also a decrease in the number of students taking books out weekly (see Table 4.3). Again, NSWL did not seem to play a major role in motivating more students to take new or additional initiatives to borrow books out from the school library to read more frequently. Interviews with the school librarians regarding their students’ book-borrowing rates revealed that a majority of students have other formal commitments imposed by the curricula, leading to a decrease in the number of students taking books out for voluntary reading after school. According to the school librarians:

Bradbury Librarian: *“At Bradbury I should certainly hope that students are visiting the library at least once per week as every class has a scheduled weekly visit! (After examining the results collected from the Pre-Questionnaire), it is pleasing to note that at least a small amount of students are reporting that they are taking books home to read, as by 5th-grade, they are no longer required to by their class teachers. However, it is also very sad to see that such statistics could not sustain as indicated on the Post-Questionnaire results.”*

Kingston Librarian: *“At Kingston, it is a compulsory that they need to take out books from the school library at least once a week. Only small amount of students would prefer not to take out books for a week or two because they don’t have time to read, too many other activities, too many books to read at home or can’t find what they want to read.”*

Interviews with the librarians suggested that the declines in students’ book-borrowing rates were likely to be the fact the existing library collection could no longer satisfy the reading needs of the students. For example, given the small size of collections at both school libraries, students who were keen readers might have already gone

through most of the books they liked in the school library. In addition, for other more popular fictions, such as *Harry Potter*, or *Lord of the Rings*, or other stories by famous contemporary authors, there would usually be a long waitlist. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, there were obvious declines in the number of students using the library for 'pleasure' reading. Having taken all these factors into consideration, it was only logical to witness this decrease (of 10.6 percentage points) in the daily book-borrowing rate amongst students.

4.2.2. Students' ratings of school-library environment, instructions and services before and after introduction of NSWL

As mentioned in Section 2.3.3, another important role of the school library is to create a 'joyful' reading environment. In addition to providing a reading space that is bright, cheerful, comfortable and inviting, this environment also needs to have an intrinsic atmosphere of excitement, possibilities and books.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, it is very clear that the library and the instructions in its use and the provision of information technology tools to recreate representations of their learning is highly valued by the school librarians. Students need to know how to identify a need for information; to locate, gather and select relevant information; and to apply information to resolve an issue under question¹¹⁸ so that they could become independent and gain confidence in selecting books and enjoying reading (see Sections 2.4 to 2.6). Sections C and D on both the Pre- and Post-Questionnaires asked the students to rate their satisfaction with the overall school-library environment, service quality, and the ease of locating their desired materials in the school library. The purpose of this was to obtain further information to determine whether there was any association between the library environment and students' voluntary reading. The library-skill lessons were also considered one of the major factors influencing the use of NSWL, as it was introduced and promoted to the students during the library classes at both schools. Students could also gain access to NSWL via any computer stations inside the school library. Students needed to depend on the school librarians to teach them the necessary searching skills to access, as well as how to navigate through NSWL. I also interviewed the Bradbury and Kingston Librarian on their views about how students

¹¹⁷ BUZZEO, Toni. (2007) "Literacy and the Changing Role of the Elementary Library Media Specialist." *Library Media Connection*, April/May, Vol. 25, No. 7, pp. 19.

¹¹⁸ HUBBARD, Susan. (1987) *Information Skills for an Information Society: a Review of Research*. ERIC Digest. Available at: <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9218/information.htm>

saw library-skill lessons, in an attempt to identify to what extent library staff's helpfulness and students' ease of locating their desired materials within the school library would influence the usage of library resources, including NSWL. The information below also helped explain why a larger number of students preferred listening to NSWL at home, rather than at school.

Changes in students' ratings on overall school-library environment

Effort spent in creating an inviting atmosphere for a school library was rewarded by children's increased interest in reading and their consequent achievement in becoming more skillful readers.¹¹⁹ Questionnaire items 8 and item 9, *Do you use the library to study/do your homework/coursework in?* and *How would you describe the library?* (see Table 4.4) sought to understand how the school library's overall environment influenced students' inclinations to use the school library.

(Table 4.4) (C) Library and Services Available			
8.	Do you use library to study/do your homework/coursework in?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Always	2.5	2.7
	Most of the time	15.4	7.4
	Sometimes	40.0	34.8
	Not very often	28.1	38.3
	Never	14.0	16.8
9.	How would you describe the library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Very important for helping me with my school work	14.3	13.6
	A quiet place where I can concentrate and do my work	24.8	31.9
	A place where I can relax and read	57.4	49.6
	Noisy and frantic	2.3	1.7
	A place I want to get out of as soon as possible	1.2	3.2

These changes recorded on the student questionnaire survey indicated the complex relationships between students' ratings on the school library's overall environment and their direct influence on students' motivation towards reading. The number of

¹¹⁹ CODY, B. (1973) *Using Literature with Young Children*. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown ; HUCK, S. (1976) *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*. (3rd ed.) New York, N.Y.: Holt Rinehart and Winston.

students who found the school library “a quiet place where I can concentrate and do my work” had increased. Originally, 57.4% of students described the school library to be “a place where I can relax and read”, however, five months later, only 49.6% of students said so. In addition, the number of students who described the library as “noisy and frantic” had also decreased (see Table 4.4). Such findings followed the same patterns which supported the notion that the school library was being seen as a place for ‘work’ instead of ‘fun’, suggesting that the school library is synonymous with thinking about school work. Students’ ratings conveyed the idea that the library is now a place for active and formal learning.

Changes in students’ library-information skills and relations to the library-lesson curricula

*“Information literacy [skills] is the ability to effectively ‘access’ and evaluate information for a given need.”*¹²⁰ These skills must be taught, if students are to function in an information environment.¹²¹ Evidence of independence was identified in students in general who appeared to have mastered the basic library skills, and were seen to have the confidence and competence to proceed and progress unaided. Each week the librarians introduced different aspects of library skills. Some weeks focused on the selection and reading of books, and other weeks involved a short activity on information handling, as well as time to change books. For some of the individualized classes, students were introduced to different books and databases, such as NSWL, and the students were left to make their own selection of books to borrow. Questionnaire items 15 and 16, *Do you use the library computer catalogue to find books in the library?* and *Do you use the library computer catalogue without help?* (see Table 4.5) set out to measure the lessons’ effectiveness in ensuring the students to acquire the necessary skills to become independent information seekers.

¹²⁰ BREIVIK, P. (1985) “Putting Libraries Back in the Information Society.” *American Libraries*, November, Vol. 16, No. 10, pp. 723.

¹²¹ DEMO, W. (1986) *The Idea of Information Literacy in the Age of High Tech*. Unpublished paper, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Dryden, N.Y. ED282537.

(Table 4.5) (D) Curriculum and Library			
15.	Do you use library computer catalogue to find books in library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Always	7.0	10.8
	Most of the time	25.6	22.8
	Sometimes	29.3	32.0
	Not very often	24.2	20.8
	Never	13.9	13.5
16.	Do you use library computer catalogue without help?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Always	18.4	40.7
	Most of the time	20.2	21.2
	Sometimes	37.5	15.7
	Not very often	13.2	8.9
	Never	10.7	13.6

Interviews with the school librarians revealed that the library-skill lessons were scheduled for all 5th- and 6th-grade students on a weekly basis throughout the entire school year. The student questionnaire results indicated that the explicit and systemic teaching of library skills was the key mechanism for developing competence amongst students. Post-Questionnaire results, (five months later) indicated an obvious growth in the number of students taking the initiative to use the library computer catalogue to find books in the school library (see Table 4.5). In addition, there were also a larger number of students claiming to be able to use the computer catalogue without help. For example, there was a 22.3 percentage-point increase in the number of students claiming being able to use the computer catalogue “Always” without help; 1 percentage-point increase in number of respondents saying “Most of the time” (see Table 4.5). Interviews with the school librarians revealed that such information-seeking skills are strongly emphasized at both schools. According to the school librarians’ explanations:

Bradbury and Kingston Librarian: *“Instruction in library and information skills (such as using the OPAC¹²²) is a valuable and essential part of the school’s educational programmes even at elementary-school level. Essential library and information skills encompass more than just locating a book and access to information sources. The whole idea of a library lesson is to ensure that students are effective users of ideas and information, as today, students*

¹²² OPAC – Online Public Access Catalogue or library computer catalogue.

need to learn what to do with information and what to do with it, and not just how to find it."

These findings suggest that the library-skill lessons contributed to the students' development of independence and ease of information seeking. The above results endorsed that the library-skill lessons indeed helped students acquire the skills to use the OPAC. Interviews with the librarians also revealed that in terms of locating information and reading materials, the students commonly identified the school library as their source of information and the use of the computer catalogue as the primary source. The library skills were introduced and practiced in the previous semester which led to a form of independence amongst students. In other words, the majority of the students in this study showed signs of understanding how to go about finding resources.

Students' ratings on service attitudes of library staff

Today, school librarians are expected to serve as partners in literacy. Questionnaire item 10-B, *Are the library staff helpful to you?* (see Table 4.6) was designed to determine whether students' needs were met in a supportive, constructive and pleasant manner inside the school library, as these factors could directly influence students' inclinations to use the school library. At both Bradbury and Kingston School, the librarians are also expected to serve as facilitators of voluntary reading. School librarians' attitudes and their efforts in making the school library an inviting and attractive place immediately tell the students that voluntary and independent reading is valued.¹²³ Librarians today are also expected to serve as promoters of the love of reading, creators of joyful reading environments, collaborative partners, and knowledgeable teachers and designers of collaborative literacy engagements. The crucial role librarians play in providing resources is the backbone of school-wide efforts to improve reading skills.¹²⁴ Finally, all users value professional, respectful and courteous interactions with the library staff, and there is no exception for elementary-school students. Compared to the pre-NSWL survey, substantially more

¹²³ MORROW, Lesley Mandel. (1985) *Promoting Voluntary Reading in School and Home*. Fastback 225, pp. 11.

¹²⁴ BUZZEO, Toni. (2007) "Literacy and the Changing Role of the Elementary Library Media Specialist." *Library Media Connection*, April/May, Vol. 25, No. 7, pp. 18.

students described library staffs’ helpfulness as “OK” in the post-NSWL survey. However, fewer students gave more positive response of “Yes” (see Table 4.6).

(Table 4.6) (C) Library and Services Available			
10-B.	Are library staff helpful to you?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Yes	82.8	65.8
	No	9.1	2.7
	It is OK	8.0	31.5

Interviews with the school librarians led to the conclusion that students gradually began to see less value in the weekly library instruction that was repetitive, not building on existing knowledge and skills, especially for students who were already keen and frequent users of the library. Given the varying computer-skill levels amongst the students, library staff might have spent too much time explaining how to find books, and how to use the computer catalogue, given some students had already acquired the skills. However, the lower overall scores did not necessarily mean that the students were intimidated by the library staff or too afraid to talk to them. Such findings could also be interpreted as students had learned to become more self-reliant and shifted towards self-service inside the school library since they had developed confidence, independence¹²⁵, and ease with information seeking in general (see Table 4.5). Interviews with the school librarians revealed that students were expected to be more independent in their use of library and resources, and students were generally independent, but some might show a reluctance to seek help (the students who failed to find the correct book shelves for topics) or recognize when help was appropriate, particularly when searching the Internet. And some students simply preferred to help each other find information (see Table 4.2).

4.2.3. Changes in students’ reading practices

The question *What type of books do you enjoy reading in your spare time?* sought to identify topics of books that students were interested. The Bradbury and Kingston

¹²⁵ Independence is closely associated with the confident and competent handling of a skill, the ability to proceed without assistance. It is also dependent upon motivation and the desire to proceed, the recognition of a need, and the confidence to tackle something learned either in a new environment or under new circumstances. – WILLIAMS, D. and C. WAVELL. (2001) *Impact of the School Library Resource Centre on Learning*. Aberdeen: the Robert Gordon University for MLA – the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, pp. 116. Available at: <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/files/SLRCreport.pdf>

Librarian agreed that knowledge of students' reading interests on the part of the school librarian and parent contributes greatly to building a library collection with a range of books targeted beyond informational curriculum needs, and more towards students' personal interests and pursuits that could motivate them to keep reading. While there was an increase (of 3.9 percentage points) in the number of students claiming to enjoy reading poetry, there was little change in other reading-material preferences. For example, for fiction books, changes in most categories were within 1 to 2 percentage points, except for the following: 2.4 percentage-point increase in Detective stories; 1.3 percentage-point decrease in Romance stories; and 4.9 percentage-point decrease in Animals books. The three most popular choices of fiction books amongst these students recorded on the Post-Questionnaire were: **First Choice: Adventure/Fantasy Books**, which remained at the top of these children's fiction book wish list 26.9% (despite of a 0.6 percentage-point decrease); **Second Choice: Detective Books**, received a 2.4 percentage-point growth; **Third Choice: Horror Books**, received a 1.3 percentage-point increase, and came third on the ranking list; **Romance Books**, received a 1.3 percentage-point decrease, and remained the most unpopular choice of books on both Pre- and Post-Questionnaires. With reference to the rankings of the three most popular categories of non-fiction books, the results are as follows: **First Choice: Animal Books**, which remained at the top of these children's non-fiction-book wish list, that is 29.7% (despite of a 4.9 percentage-point decrease); **Second Choice: History Books**, received a 4.4 percentage-point growth, which came second; and **Third Choice: General Science Books**, which received a growth of 2.5 percentage points, and came third. Interviews with the school librarians, in response to my question regarding their understanding of their students' reading-material preferences was that a majority of the elementary students are still not ready for romance, and they have a tendency to choose adventure books. According to the school librarians:

Kingston Librarian: *"I believe for primary school students, they don't have the mind set of thinking romantic stuff. Generally it is the habit for secondary-school students. Since they are still young, and I can understand why they find an excitement from reading adventure and horror stories. For Kingston, since it is so small, we can almost understand the reading habits of certain good readers. Most of the students are good readers. What I usually find is that crime and detective works are equally popular as a proportion of the reading diet of both sexes."*

Bradbury Librarian: *“I think that the results reflect the popularity of authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, Anthony Horowitz, J.K. Rowling, Enid Blyton, and Roald Dahl. These authors tend to concentrate on the genres that ended up with the top rankings. Jacqueline Wilson for example writes almost exclusively about families. In addition, also I am not sure if there are many books in our library that could be classified as ‘Romance’. There is also an issue in that students may not know what we mean by ‘Classics’. Children’s classics such as The Secret Garden, The Borrowers, and Oliver Twist are borrowed from the library, but may not be flagged as ‘Classics’ in the minds of students. Alice in Wonderland could easily be thought of as an adventure story.”*

On the Parent Questionnaire, parents were also asked to give information about how much they knew about their children’s reading preferences, children’s most-preferred book categories were somewhat consistent with the book categories selected by the teaching staff and the parents (based on what they thought their students/children most preferred to read) on their questionnaires – such findings indicated that both parents, school teachers and librarians had a basic and common understanding of the general reading interests of these children (see Table 4.7).

(Table 4.7) Teachers & Librarians: <i>(What teachers and librarians thought their students’ most-preferred choice of books)</i> (n=6)	
Fiction-Book Category:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Choice: Adventure/fantasy • 2nd Choice: Horror • 3rd Choice: Thrillers
Non-Fiction Category:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Choice: Animals • 2nd Choice: Art • 3rd Choice: History
Parents: <i>(What parents thought their children’s most-preferred choice of books)</i> (n=6)	
Fiction-Book Category:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Choice: Horror • 2nd Choice: Adventure/fantasy • 3rd Choice: Detective
Non-Fiction Category:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Choice: General science • 2nd Choice: Animals • 3rd Choice: Art

4.3. Gendered Comparison on Overall School-Library Usage and Reading Practices

In order to provide a context for understanding the potential impact of the NSWL innovation, this section sets out to explore whether there were distinctive gendered

differences in reading practices and preferences amongst the students. The analysis is based on the quantitative results obtained from the same student questionnaire surveys. The idea and the aim of the gendered comparison derived from the fact that in the beginning of this research both school librarians highlighted the difficulties faced in encouraging more boys to read for 'pleasure'. It was also felt that boys might be especially tempted to read more by technology mediated means. Owing to this difficulty, the school librarians also pointed out that there was a need to choose books for their students in anticipation of boys' refusals to read "girls' books".

The results of the overall gendered comparison were as follows. More girls visited the school library on a daily basis voluntarily, both before and after the introduction of NSWL (see Table 4.8); more girls used the school library for 'fun' (see Table 4.9); and more girls took books out of the school library to read voluntarily, both daily and weekly (see Table 4.10). On the contrary, the questionnaire survey results indicated a decline in the number of boys involved in voluntary reading in the following areas. For example, there was a decrease in the number of boys visiting the school library daily (see Table 4.8); a drop in the number of boys using the school library for 'fun' (see Table 4.9); and a fall in the number of boys taking books from the school library to read in their free time at home (see Table 4.10). However, there were some unexpected changes. For example, a number of boys became interested in reading poetry at home (an increase of 2.7 percentage points) (see Table 4.11). NSWL did not appear to be effective in motivating these young boys in doing more voluntary reading. On the contrary, the results indicated that there were apparent declines in a number of areas. I now share the results from the Pre- and Post-Questionnaire survey comparison on students' reading practices.

4.3.1. Girls and boys involved in voluntary reading before and after introduction of NSWL

This section sets out to compare the frequencies of voluntary reading and reading-material preferences by gender. The student questionnaire results provided interesting evidence of gendered differences in students' reading practices and motivation. The following findings (Tables 4.8 to 4.11) were remarkably consistent with the results of

the earlier (quantitative) research conducted by Barrs in 1993¹²⁶ and Millard in 1997.¹²⁷ More girls would visit the school library on a daily basis voluntarily; more girls used the school library for ‘fun’; and more girls took books out of the school library to read voluntarily on a daily, and weekly basis. Generally, the data also revealed several marked differences in the subjects which girls and boys find attractive, a finding that came as no surprise to most classroom teachers and librarians. For example, a higher number of girls preferred reading fiction, while boys preferred non-fiction. Furthermore, the findings also suggested that more girls enjoyed reading poetry (see Table 4.11).

(Table 4.8)						
How often do you visit school library?	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Total (% points)	
	Boys (n=161)	Boys (n=142)	Girls (n=131)	Girls (n=118)	Boys (A+B/2)	Girls (D+E/2)
	A	B	D	E	G	H
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Daily	10.7	3.6	29.2	14.7	7.2	22
Weekly	74.8	71.2	57.7	68.1	73	63
Monthly	7.5	7.9	0.8	6.9	7.7	3.9
Once/term	1.3	5.0	0.0	2.6	3.2	1.3
Annually	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0
Never	0.6	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.3	0.4
Cannot remember	5.0	11.5	11.5	7.8	8.3	9.8

(Table 4.9)						
Do you user library for fun?	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Total (% points)	
	Boys (n=161)	Boys (n=142)	Girls (n=131)	Girls (n=118)	Boys (A+B/2)	Girls (D+E/2)
	A	B	D	E	G	H
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	50.3	46.0	51.5	51.9	48.2	51.7
No	49.7	54.0	48.5	48.1	51.9	48.3

(Table 4.10)						
How often do you borrow books from school library to read in spare time at home?	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Total (% points)	
	Boys (n=161)	Boys (n=142)	Girls (n=131)	Girls (n=118)	Boys (A+B/2)	Girls (D+E/2)
	A	B	D	E	G	H
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Daily	22.9	8.5	19.7	13.9	15.7	16.8
Weekly	57.3	55.6	63.8	58.3	56.5	61.1
Monthly	10.8	12.7	3.9	9.6	11.8	6.8
Once/term	0.0	3.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.7
Annually	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Never	1.3	4.2	0.0	2.6	2.7	1.3
Cannot remember	7.0	15.5	11.0	13.9	11.3	12.5

¹²⁶ BARRS, M. (1993) "Introduction: Reading the Difference". in M. BARRS and S. PIDGEON (eds.) *Reading the Difference: Gender and Reading in Elementary Classroom*. (pp. 1-11) London: CLPE.

¹²⁷ MILLARD, E. (1997) *Differently Literate: Boys, Girls and the Schooling Literacy*. London: Falmer Press.

(Table 4.11)						
What kinds of books do you enjoy reading at home?	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Pre- Questionnaire	Post- Questionnaire	Total (% points)	
	Boys (n=161)	Boys (n=142)	Girls (n=131)	Girls (n=118)	Boys (A+B/2)	Girls (D+E/2)
	A	B	D	E	G	H
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fiction	51.6	54.2	53.5	54.8	52.9	54.2
Non-Fiction	45.8	40.5	43.0	36.7	43.0	40.0
Poetry	2.6	5.3	3.5	8.6	4.0	6.1

4.3.2. Gendered differences: understanding the nature versus nurture controversy

The student questionnaire results would come as no surprise to most classroom teachers and librarians, and they might reflect that internalization of cultural expectations that girls would be more positive about reading than boys.¹²⁸ According to previous research, the gender-specific beliefs concerning what others expect about reading may explain consistent findings that girls tend to possess more positive attitudes than boys.¹²⁹ Hall also highlighted that such gendered differences could be caused by the predominantly 'female' culture of elementary classrooms. Certainly, in the elementary school high-status literacy activities were most often carried out by women: there is a shortage of male-role models, and the classroom often resembles a domestic environment.¹³⁰

Fiction versus non-fiction; girls' preference for poetry

The differences in reading preferences between the two sexes are particularly marked in relation to books about fiction, non-fiction and poetry, as the questionnaire results also indicated that more girls preferred reading fiction while more boys preferred non-

¹²⁸ EISENBERG, N., C.L. MARTION and R.A. FABES. (1996) Gender Development and Gender Effects. in D. BERLINER and R.C. CALFEE (eds.) *Handbook of Educational Psychology*. (pp. 358-396) New York, N.Y.: Macmillan ; MCKENNA, M.C., D.J. KEAR and R.A. ELLSWORTH. (1995) "Children's Attitudes Toward Reading: a National Survey." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 934-955.

¹²⁹ ANDERSON, M.A., N.A. TOLLEFSON and E.C. GILBERT. (1985) "Giftedness and Reading: a Cross-Sectional View of Differences in Reading Attitudes and Behaviors." *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 186-189 ; ASKOV, E. and T. FISHBACK. (1973) "An Investigation of Primary Pupils' Attitude Toward Reading." *Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol. 41, pp. 1-7 ; ROSS, E.P. and R.K. FLETCHER. (1989) "Responses to Children's Literature by Environment, Grade Level, and Sex." *Reading Instruction Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 22-28 ; SHAPIRO, J.E. (1980) "Primary Children's Attitudes Toward Reading in Male and Female Teachers' Classrooms: an Exploratory Study." *Journal of Reading Behavior*, Vol. 12, pp. 255-257 ; SMITH, M.C. (1990) "A Longitudinal Investigation of Reading Attitude Development from Childhood to Adulthood." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 83, No. 4, pp. 215-219 ; STEVENSON, H.W. and R.S. NEWMAN. (1986) "Long-Term Prediction of Achievement and Attitudes in Mathematics and Reading." *Child Development*, Vol. 57, No. 3, pp. 646-657 ; WALLBROWN, F.H. D.H. BROWN and A.W. ENGIN. (1978) "A Factor Analysis of Reading Attitudes Along with Measures of Reading Achievement and Scholastic Aptitude." *Psychology in the Schools*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 160-165.

¹³⁰ HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) "Gendered Readings: Helping Boys Develop as Critical Readers." *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 66.

fiction; and more girls enjoyed reading poetry. For example, on the Post-Questionnaire, students were asked which types of books they enjoyed reading in their spare time. Students were given three different choices, **Fiction, Non-fiction and Poetry** (see Table 4.11). The results were that 8.6% of girls chose **Poetry**, while only 5.3% of boys chose this form of literature. Interviews with school librarians revealed that poetry is not always written in the form of natural language of childhood, and therefore does not always hold great appeal to the youngsters. According to the school librarians, girls' language abilities tend to mature a few years earlier than boys', and therefore girls might already have developed a stronger sensitivity, imagination and interest for appreciating poetry than boys of the same age. Hall and Coles provided an explanation as to why boys preferred non-fiction books by highlighting that fact that boys are reading the kind of materials that offer them one way into narrative.¹³¹

In summary, the above questionnaire data suggests that girls used the school library more often than boys. Secondly, given avid readers could be found in both sexes, girls read more, and read more fiction books, and also read more poetry. Having established the different patterns in the reading practices between boys and girls, I will use the student interview results to reflect on the student questionnaire data.

4.4. Further Interrogating Students' Reading Practices and Gendered Differences: Analysis of Results from Student Interviews

In the previous section, I have reported the quantitative differences in the school library usage and reading-material preferences between genders. In this section, I use the student interview data to gather further insights into students' reading practices in relation to school-library usage and environment, with the aim to advance our understanding of the student questionnaire survey results. Having recognized the fact that the avid readers tended to be girls, I now set out to identify the factors related to amount and types of voluntary reading amongst the students. Based on the interview data collected, ethnicity was observed to play a very little role in influencing students' recreational reading attitudes. On the other hand, gendered differences, choices,

¹³¹ Ibid.

access to books, family or parental influences seemed to play a key role in shaping reading for 'pleasure'. The following interview data provides the reader with an overall sense of how these factors related to students' motivation in reading.

Factors related to amount and types of voluntary reading

Reading ability is influenced by the amount of reading that a student does.¹³²

According to Mohr, *"intuitively, readers are likely to be more motivated to read, and this extra reading practices fuel their reading progress."*¹³³ All girls selected from both Bradbury and Kingston School for the interviews were identified by the school librarians as strong readers and relatively high achievers. They were also enthusiastic readers, particularly, the three Kingston girls, Ashley, Yuko and Grace. Each of these girls was articulate, confident and popular with peers. It should also be noted that these students had different NSWL-usage patterns, which is presumably why they were selected by the two school librarians to take part in the focus group interviews. Ashley, Yuko and Grace enjoyed talking about books. It was also evident that they enjoyed reading in school and frequently read at home. For example, I tried to find out the amount of reading they did by asking, *"How often do you use the school and public library and how often do you read?"*, their responses were:

Yuko: *"I take books out from school library every week, if the books are good."*

Ashley and Grace also said that they would take books out from the school library for leisure reading almost every week as long as the books are interesting.

Grace: *"We read at least one book or some books everyday."*

Ashley and Yuko also indicated that they would read at least one to several books after school everyday. Interviews with the Kingston Librarian also confirmed that these girls were avid readers:

¹³² CIPIELEWSKI, J. and K.E. STANVOICH. (1992) "Predicting Growth in Reading Ability from Children's Exposure to Print." *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, Vol. 54, pp. 74-89.

¹³³ MOHR, Kathleen J. (2006) "Children's Choices for Recreational Reading: a Three-Part Investigation of Selection Preferences, Rationales, and Processes." *Journal of Literacy Research*, Vol. 38 No.1, pp. 85. ; Also available online at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3785/is_200601/ai_n16452270/pg_3?tag=contentcoll. pp. 3.

Kingston Librarian: *"When you see children who are successful academically like Grace, Yuko, Ashley whom you interviewed, they are doing a great deal of reading at home."*

Given that Cherie at Bradbury School did not indicate how frequently she engaged herself in reading after school, it was pointed out by the Bradbury Librarian that Cherie was one of the most dedicated users their library staff had ever encountered, and Cherie also volunteered to work at the school library as part of her extra-curricular activity after school. It should also be noted that Cherie was the winner of the first Bradbury *NSWL Competition*. Judging from the amount of reading that Ashley, Cherie, Grace, and Yuko were doing, it was evident that they have become agents of their own reading growth.¹³⁴ Intrinsically, all these motivated readers were disposed to read a wide range of topics and genres.¹³⁵ For example, at the interviews, when I asked the girls *"What kinds books do you enjoy reading in your free time?"*, answers from these avid readers would cover a wide range of genres, and seldom mentioned that they disliked reading particular themes:

Cherie: *"I like to read anything that is not scary, and anything that is not babyish."*

Grace: *"I like anything, from modern to classics, to semi-classics."*

Yuko: *"I like creepy books, and books about mysteries or mysterious things."*

Ashley: *"I like to read about animals, and comedy."*

Findings also verified the notion that children who find reading enjoyable will often read more and will read widely.¹³⁶ In fact, Anderson contended that avid readers read independently as much as twenty times more than less frequent readers.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ GUTHRIE, J.T. W.D. SCHAFER and C. HUANG (2001) "Benefits of Opportunity to Read and Balanced Reading Instruction for Reading Achievement and Engagement: a Policy Analysis of State NAEP in Maryland." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 94, No. 3, pp. 145-162.

¹³⁵ GUTHRIE, J. T. (2001) "Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading." *Reading Online*, Vol. 4, No. 8. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/handbook/guthrie/>

¹³⁶ GARDINER, S. (2001) "Ten Minutes a day for Silent Reading." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 59, No. 2, pp. 32-35.

¹³⁷ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT, and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education.

Home/Family learning environment and parental influences

Supportive of what Epstein suggested, the interview data also revealed that family and parental influences play a key role in these children's success in school as well as fostering their love for reading. Parent's reading to children provides models for children to learn how to read.¹³⁸ For example, when I asked these girls, "*Do you parents still read to you at home?*"

Cherie: "*Yes, my mother still reads to me at home ... Usually, my mother offers to read to me.*"

Yuko also indicated: "*That is too baby!!! But my mother sometimes asks me questions about the books that I read, just to see how much I understand them, instead of reading to me.*"

Such a family setting, where interaction between adults and children is socially, emotionally and intellectually stimulating is conducive to literary interest and growth.¹³⁹ Taking both Cherie and Yuko as examples, the benefits of having parents spending the time and efforts reading to the children were self-evident. Cherie volunteered to work at the school library so that she could have better access to books, while Yuko was identified as one of the most avid readers and an apparent keen NSWL user by the Kingston Librarian. These findings were also supported by Tommey and Allen, as they pointed out that reading to children has been attributed with a wide range of educational effects, including fostering intellectual development¹⁴⁰, contributing to the development of reading and writing skills¹⁴¹, and also encouraging positive attitudes to books.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ MCQUILLAN, J. (1998). *The Literacy Crisis: False Claims, Real Solutions*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

¹³⁹ HOLDAWAY, D. (1979) *The Foundations of Literacy*. New York, N.Y.: Ashton Scholastic.

¹⁴⁰ TOOMEY, D. and C. ALLEN. (1991) "Parental Involvement: Fostering Literacy Development in the Home." in E. FURNISS and P. GREEN. (eds.) *The Literacy Agenda: Issues for the Nineties*. South Yarra: Eleanor Curtain.

¹⁴¹ ROWE, K.J. (1990) "The Influence of Reading Activity at Home on Students' Attitude Towards Reading, Classroom Attentiveness and Reading Achievement." *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 61, No. 1, pp. 19-32.

¹⁴² TEALE, W.H. (1984) "Reading to Young Children: Its Significance for Literacy Development." in H. GOELMAN, A. OBERG and F. SMITH. (eds.) *Awakening to Literacy: the University of Victoria Symposium on Children's Response to a Literate Environment*. (pp. 110-121) Exeter, N.H.: Heinemann.

Access and availability of reading materials

Elly also revealed a strong link between reading achievement and book access, as the study suggested that opportunities for book borrowing/access and avenues for home use are significant factors in reading motivation.¹⁴³ Taking both Ashley and Grace as examples, given they both admitted to have already outgrown the idea of having an adult reading to them, their comments revealed that they had taken a lot of initiatives to obtain books from a number of avenues for their free-time reading. For example, when I asked *“Do you also use the public library?”*, and their responses were:

Grace: *“I sometimes go there (to look for information) for my school projects. And I use their library bus (referring to mobile libraries). It is easy, I can just take the books and go home.”*

Yuko: *“They [public library] do not have enough English books.” “The English books are book babyish. Besides, it is hard to get the books you want.” “[But] I go there to look for information for my school project too, and I sometimes go there for entertainment.”*

Colin: *“I still sometimes borrow books from the school library, but I don’t go to the public library.”*

Grace: *“My parents and other friends sometimes buy books for us as gifts. But we like to go to the bookstores and buy our own books, because we could choose what we want to read.”*

There was broad agreement amongst the Kingston girls, as both Ashley and Yuko also indicated that they would go to the bookstores to buy books for themselves, in addition to receiving books as gifts from their parents and other relatives for different occasions.

Access to books is determined by both the availability of books and the activities associated with the books.¹⁴⁴ As mentioned previously, Cherie was identified by the library staff as one of the most dedicated school-library users. She also volunteered to work at the school library as part of her extra-curricular activity. In addition, Cherie indicated at the student interview that she would frequently take books to read even

¹⁴³ ELLEY, W.B. (1992) *How in the World Do Students Read?* Hamburg, Germany: International Association for the Evaluation Achievement.

¹⁴⁴ O'DAY, Pamela S. (2002) *Reading While Listening: Increasing Access to Print Through the Use of Audio Books*. Ph.D. dissertation. Dept. of Education, Lynch Graduate School of Education, Boston College, pp. 30.

when she went on holidays with her parents. For example, when I asked *“Do you take books with you to read when you go traveling with your parents?”*:

Cherie: *“I sometimes take paper-books with me when I go on holiday...”*

The evidence of students' responses from the interviews also supported the researches by Krashen¹⁴⁵, Worthy¹⁴⁶ and Pritchard¹⁴⁷, as the interview results also pointed to the same factors that appeared to play an important role in motivating elementary students to read voluntarily at school and at home. That is, an interaction with choice, opportunity and access, in addition to home environment and parental guidance. Evidence suggested that students' access to reading materials might come from a variety of sources, including the public and school libraries, and sometimes even personal purchases and gifts. Such evidence also supported the notions that choice increases the students' interest in books and motivates them to read¹⁴⁸, and increasing students' access to books and promoting interest in books can significantly influence a students' motivation to read.¹⁴⁹

Gendered differences and reading preferences amongst students

As mentioned previously, gendered boundaries are common in schools. According to the school librarians, students often talk about the library books as “girls' books” or “boys' books”, verbally constructing gendered boundaries around their reading choices. For example, the school librarians had previously told me that they chose books for their students in anticipation of boys' refusals to read “girls' books”. The

¹⁴⁵ KRASHEN, S. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.

¹⁴⁶ WORTHY, J. (1998) ““On Every Page Someone Gets Killed!” Book Conversations You Don't Hear in School.” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Vol. 41, No. 7, pp. 508-517.

¹⁴⁷ PRICHARD, Lyn. (May, 2000) “Understanding the Reluctant Male Reader: Implications for the Teacher Librarian and the School Library.” *Access*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 11-14.

¹⁴⁸ MCCARTHY, S.J., J.V. HOFFMAN and L. GALDA. (1999) “Readers in Elementary Classrooms: Learning Goals and Instructional Principles that Can Inform Practice.” in J.T. GUTHIRE and D.E. ALVERMAN. (eds) *Engaged Reading: Processes, Practices, and Policy Implications*. (pp. 46-80) New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press ; TUNNELL, M.A. and J.S. JACOBS. (1989) “Using “Real” Books: Research Findings on Literature Based Reading Instruction.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 42, No. 6, pp. 470-477 ; WORTHY, J. (2002) “What Makes Intermediate-Grade Students Want to Read?” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 6, pp. 568-569 ; WORTHY, J., M. MOORMAN and M. TURNER. (1999) “What Johnny Likes to Read is Hard to Find in School.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 12-27.

¹⁴⁹ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996) “Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; PALMER, B.M., R.M. CODLING and L.B. GAMBRELL. (1994) “In Their Own Words: What Elementary Students Have to Say About Motivation to Read.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 176-178.

Bradbury Librarian pointed out that when it comes to books, boys have different agendas than girls. Girls also tend to be more flexible readers than boys, as girls seem to read all kinds of books, even if the central characters are boys. Compared to boys, girls are likely to be more open-minded, embracing and less gender-conscious when it comes to choosing reading materials. On the other hand, many boys have the tendency to despise reading girls' books, without fearing missing out on anything significant, whereas girls, interestingly, do not mind reading about books featuring male protagonists. In this section, I will use the student interview data, whilst recognizing its limits, to illustrate how those boundaries are constructed and resisted, the various ways these children articulate those boundaries. I now share examples of the ways in which children performed those gendered boundaries that were revealed in their book-choosing at the student interviews.

Boy's choices, boy's rejections and boy's boundaries

Following Dutro's interview techniques on gendered differences in reading, I first introduced reading materials that required the children to confront their gendered assumptions about reading, and that created an opportunity to see how gender was centrally involved in shaping reading practices.¹⁵⁰ This interview on gendered comparison began with a reference to two books featuring two young girls as the protagonists, *Heidi* and *Alice in the Wonderland*. Boys' comments revealed their refusal to cross gendered boundaries in their reading choices, for example, they would not read stories featuring girl protagonists, but preferred adventure. When I asked the Bradbury boys "*Would like to read books like Heidi or Alice in the Wonderland?*", their responses were:

Colin: "*I like to read adventure books, because it is more exciting. I don't like girlie book like Heidi or Alice in the Wonderland.*"

Eric and Yuya: "*Those books are for girls!*"

I then asked, "*Why do you think they are for girls?*"

Eric and Yuya both said concurrently: "*Because they are about girls doing girls' stuff.*"

¹⁵⁰ DUTRO, Elizabeth. (2000) *Reading Gender/Gendered Readers: Girls, Boys and Popular Fiction*. Ph.D. dissertation. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, pp. 275.

Colin also agreed with what Eric and Yuya stated and said that if the books were catered especially for girls, they would feature girls engaged in “girls’ activities”.

It appeared that Colin’s judgments on whether or not the book was masculine or exciting seemed based on the gender of the main character. Other boys like Eric and Yuya also supported Colin’s idea and constructed the gendered boundaries by refusing to read books that would include female protagonists. According to the school librarians, boys usually associate those books with a lack of action, and they made assumptions that they were the kinds of books that girls would prefer. As observed by Dutro, “*boys’ judgment on whether or not the book is masculine or feminine seems based on the sex of the protagonist (or perhaps the theme of romance)*”, or their rejection could be caused by merely seeing a girl on the cover of the book.¹⁵¹ Colin also expressed his desire of becoming an author someday, specializing in mystery and adventure books. In fact, Colin’s interests in mystery and adventure books are commonly found amongst boys his age. According to Reynolds’s study, 93% of boys aged seven to eleven were reported to enjoy reading adventure stories.¹⁵² The Bradbury Librarian also pointed out that Colin was granted the first prize for giving the most thorough answers for questions on the audio-book, *Tales from the Greek Legend*, chosen for the *Second NSWL Competition*. According to the Bradbury Librarian, *Tales from the Greek Legend*¹⁵³ was chosen because it was an action-packed story.

Girls’ choices and girls’ boundaries

Boys’ reluctance to cross the gendered boundaries was certainly on display. I now use the girls’ reading practices to contrast with the boys’. Girls’ comments revealed that book characters’ genders meant nothing to them, as long as the books were good and interesting. As mentioned previously, the avid readers tended to be girls, and

¹⁵¹ DUTRO, Elizabeth. (Dec. 2001/Jan. 2002) ““But That’s a Girls’ Book!” Exploring Gender Boundaries in Children’s Reading Practices.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 376.

¹⁵² REYNOLDS, KIM. (1994) *Contemporary Juvenile Reading Habits*. Roehampton Institute.

¹⁵³ For *Tales from the Greek Legend*, according to the Bradbury Librarian, the story is about the creation of the universe, featuring different Greek gods with human emotions and supernatural powers battling against various sea monsters, featuring mostly masculinized actions and adventures. The Librarian therefore hoped that by choosing this audio-book on Greek legends would attract more boys to enter the *Competition*, and this has proven that Bradbury Librarian’s decision was right, and the winner of this *NSWL Competition* turned out to be a male student.

girls also read more other genres. For example, when I asked the girls, "*What kinds of books do you enjoy reading in your free time?*", and their replies were:

Cherie: "*I like to read anything that is not scary, and anything that is not babyish.*"

Grace: "*I like anything, from modern to classics, to semi-classics.*"

Yuko: "*I like creepy books, and books about mysteries or mysterious things.*"

Ashley: "*I like to read about animals, and comedy.*"

The girls all claimed to ignore gendered boundaries and, sure enough, they did not appear to limit their reading to books about girls. They also asserted that all her girlfriends, like themselves, would choose books that interest them, regardless of the gender of the main characters. Other examples suggesting that girls in general have boarder reading-material preferences could be found in the Kingston NSWL Worksheets completed by these girls. The Kingston Librarian received a total four completed NSWL Worksheets from four different students, and they all happened to be girls. These self-completed NSWL worksheets recorded that these girls listened to a much wider range of topics, and the NSWL audio-book titles ranged from, *Little Princess*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *The Secret Garden*, *Tales from Greek Legend*, *Music for Kids*, *Little Women*, to *Opera Explained – Beethoven Fidelio*, and so on. Girls' comments also confirmed my initial assumptions that they easily, and often crossed, gendered boundaries in their reading. Given that girls claimed that they were willing to trespass on boys' reading territory, there were exceptions. For example, when the Kingston girls were asked whether they enjoyed reading about football, since there is an audio-book *The History of the World Cup* inside the NSWL database, and their responses were all the same:

Ashley, Grace and Yuko all said concurrently: "*NO! Football is boring!*"

In fact, the lack of interest in reading sport-related materials amongst girls is not unique to Kingston School. Reynolds' findings in 1994 also showed a similar pattern, that is boys prefer to read about sports more than girls: 46.5% of boys aged ten to

sixteen like to read about sports, as opposed to only 6.15% of girls.¹⁵⁴ From these students' perspective, *Heidi* or *Alice in Wonderland* are clearly marked exclusively for girls. Both boys and girls often labeled these books are "girls' books", and some girls referred to *History of Worldcup* as "boys' books". Below I present specific examples of how both boys and girls categorized books by gender and expressed their assumptions about their reading preferences of the other gender.

Gendered assumptions of reading choices

The girls make assumptions about boys' reading choices based on their conceptions of masculinity and the lengths that boys will go to defend it. Likewise, the boys make assumptions about girls' reading based on their conceptions of femininity. During the student focus group interviews, the girls were asked to make assumptions about what boys would and would not read, and students' comments sometimes confirmed, and other times challenged those assumptions. Girls' assumptions about boys' preferences were mostly grounded in the evidence of their own personal experiences. The girls made several assumptions about boys in this book-choosing excerpt. I now share the interview data revealing the gendered assumptions held by the boys and the girls. The girls first all agreed that boys would not read books about girls. However, when I asked Yuko "*What kinds of books do you think boys like to read?*", she reported having encountered a boy who was into fairy books, and she immediately asked this boy:

Yuko: "*You like fairy books, so are you a boy or a girl?*" Unexpectedly, this boy replied, "*I am gay!*" (resulted in naughty giggles amongst the girls, as the girls obviously found it very humorous, and yet a little strange.)

Yuko and other girls acknowledged that boys would be ridiculed for reading a "girl's book", but they knew that some boys would still read them. Since reading choices were met with many giggles and finger pointing, boys, for instance, could feel tremendous, though perhaps unconscious, pressure to display expected masculine traits or risk ridicule.¹⁵⁵ At the same time, the boy who liked 'fairy books', mentioned by Yuko also betrayed the girls' belief that boys should dislike books traditionally

¹⁵⁴ REYNOLDS, KIM. (1994) *Contemporary Juvenile Reading Habits*. Rochampton Institute.

¹⁵⁵ CONNELL, R. (1995) *Masculinities*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press ; MIEDZIAN, M. (1991) *Boys Will be Boys: Breaking the Link between Masculinity and Violence*. New York, N.Y.: Doubleday ; POLLACK, W. (1998) *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*. New York, N.Y.: Owl Books.

catered to girls. In this setting, both boys and girls thought that if they found a boy reading a 'fairy' or "girls' book", he would be labeled as a "sissy". According to both school librarians:

Bradbury and Kingston Librarian: *"If their friends are going to catch them reading something that hasn't been assigned as homework, it had better at least have a semi-cool over or gory 'masculine' subject matter or be otherwise explainable in a way that won't get teased by other boys or girls. For example, when Yuko found a boy reading a book on fairies, she immediately asked "Are you a girl?" And most boys would get very embarrassed by this. Some books are just easier to market to boys than others, and anything with a 'girlie' is probably not grab the attention of these young boys.*

The fascination for comics amongst boys

The extent and the nature of children's reading of comic books have been of interests to educators, as well as others concerned in any way with child development, since the advent of these products of the press some twenty-five years ago.¹⁵⁶ Comics and cartoon collections are always a popular genre amongst all ages. The presence of illustrations and less-dense text makes these materials 'non-threatening' for struggling readers, and their plots, vocabulary, and characterization can be quite sophisticated.¹⁵⁷ In addition, the level of reading competence required for comic reading tends to be lower than that required for book reading.¹⁵⁸ The blend of pictures and text assists students to visualize and construct meaning. According to the library staff, Yuya¹⁵⁹ was almost never seen at the school library, except for the mandatory weekly library-skill lessons. Despite this, Yuya did not think that reading was a feminine activity, and he immediately associated comic books with leisure reading, for example, when I asked Yuya, *"What book do you enjoy reading in your free time?"*:

¹⁵⁶ BLAKELY, W. Paul. (March, 1958) "Reading of Comic Books by Seventh-Grade Children." *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 6, pp. 326.

¹⁵⁷ CRAMER, E.H. (1994) "Connecting in the Classroom: Ideas from Teachers." in E.H. Cramer and M. Castle (eds.) *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain in Reading Education*. (pp. 125-141) Newark, De.: International Reading Association; DORRELL, L. and E. CARROLL. (August, 1981) "Spiderman at the Library." *School Library Journal*. Vol. 27, pp. 17-19.

¹⁵⁸ GREANEY, Vincent. (1980) "Factors Related to Amount and Type of Leisure Time Reading." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 339.

¹⁵⁹ According to Yuya's book-circulation records, only borrowed twelve books in total from the school library, and these included comic books and other easy-to-read popular non-fictions. Only two from the fiction collection, and all of them were of easy reading as well.

Yuya: "I like to read too, but comic books sometimes." "I am now reading the Chinese comic books *Laofuzi (Master Q)*¹⁶⁰, I like it very much, it is so funny! I don't read Chinese, but I just look at the pictures. I read Japanese comic books sometimes, because my mother is Japanese. But my mother gave away my Japanese comic books to someone." "I also take comic books with me when I go on holiday."

Eric:¹⁶¹ "But Japanese comic books are very violent."

Yuya: "Not all of them."

Yuya's interest in action-oriented comic books is also highlighted by Hall's research.¹⁶² According to her findings, a greater percentage of boys' reading diet is science fiction and fantasies, sport-related books and war. More boys than girls read comic and joke books, and humourous fiction. Such finding is also supportive to Osmont's 1987 observation, girls preferred to choose fairy stories and story books while boys chose superheroes books, comics, science fictions, and pop-up books, cartoon books, funny books and, in her words, "*exciting colourful books*".¹⁶³

The student focus group discussions provided an opportunity to work out understandings which children had and extended their understandings by allowing them to listen to and engage with understandings of others. The overall findings were consistent with what Dutro observed in the book-choosing episode, "*boys' reluctance around gendered boundaries; a hierarchy of masculinity; some girls willingness, even eagerness, to transgress gendered boundaries.*"¹⁶⁴ Interestingly, findings from the student interviews are echoed in Michael W. Smith and Jeffery D. Wilhelm's book

¹⁶⁰ Master Q/Old Master Q (Chinese: 老夫子) is a popular Chinese comic book created by Alfonso/Alphonso Wong. The comic book series/cartoon first appeared in the newspapers and magazines in Hong Kong in 1962, and later serialized in 1964. The comic is still in publication today. The comic series features the now well-known characters such as Old Master Q and Big Potato, as well as Mr. Chin, Mr. Chiu and Miss Chan, in many different hilarious situations. They are usually portrayed in a variety of social statuses, professions and time periods, ranging from beggars and office workers to actors and ancient warriors, allowing a wide variety of settings and ideas. – "Old Master Q." Wikipedia. Available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Master_Q

¹⁶¹ According to Eric's book-circulation records, he only borrowed only one book from the school library since the beginning of the school year (that is, September 2006), and by 18th May 2006, it was still overdue.

¹⁶² HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) *The Children's Reading Choices Project*. Nottingham, U.K.: University of Nottingham ; HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) "Gendered Readings: Helping Boys Develop as Critical Readers." *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 61-68.

¹⁶³ OSMONT, Pip. (1987) "Teacher Inquiry in the Classroom: Reading and Gender Set." *Language Arts*, November, Vol. 64, No. 7, pp. 758-61.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 379.

Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men, research on gender and literacy, that is boys differ from girls in the choices they make of reading materials, that is boys read less than girls; boys are more inclined to read graphic novels and comic books; boys tend to resist reading stories about girls, whereas girls do not tend to resist reading stories about boys; boys like to read about hobbies, sports, and things they might do or be interested in doing; boys read less fiction than girls and furthermore, boys tend to enjoy escapism and humour, and some boys are passionate about science fiction or fantasy, and so on.¹⁶⁵

4.5. Bringing Data Together: Summary of Results from Questionnaire Surveys and Student Interviews

The overall student questionnaire findings provided a multi-dimensional perspective on the nature and the usage of the school library. Students began to see the primary role of the school library as supporting their formal information and curriculum needs, rather than their leisure activities or personal pursuits. Although voluntary reading is regarded typically as an after-school activity, school factors, such as the environment of the school library, all turned out to be relevant. For example, there were indications that students were too busy completing the school work and other after-school activities required by their curriculum, leaving less time to engage in more 'pleasurable' reading pursuits. It might be that independent reading was a casualty of intensely academic schooling. At the same time, the students appeared to recognize and value the library's environment in relation to providing them a "quiet" space to think and to carry out their school work. Additionally, there was also an obvious increase in the number of students claiming they did not enjoy the library-skill lessons.

¹⁶⁵ SMITH, Michael W. (2002) *"Reading Don't Fix no Chevys": Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann ; According to an award-winning Canadian author John Wilson, who writes about dinosaurs, lost Arctic explorers and boys caught up in war, "Boys will not read a book that doesn't grab their attention right at the beginning and hold it all the way through. If they lose interest, they will go off and play Diablo or Warcraft. The trick to get boys reading is not to make a book simpler or better literature, but to make it more exciting. A good book for a boy is one he wants to read. They don't have to understand everything in a book, just be thrilled by it. Books for boys must be strongly plot driven. From a boy's perspective, too much character development gets in the way. What doesn't get in the way is a detailed description of a neat weapon. Boys like to know how things work. I once read an article on books for boys entitled: *Johnny Doesn't Care Why Heather has Two Mommies*. The point is that Johnny doesn't care 'why' at all, he cares 'what'. He would read the book about Heather if one mommy was a vampire and the mommies were battling for control of Heather's soul. Girls read books that are written for boys, boys don't read books written for girls. Just like in the fashion industry, there's far more for girls than boys. I also discovered this when I searched my local library for books that might appeal to my son. I assumed that the eight-year-old was reading at his age level or slightly above and needed an 'exciting' story to hold his interest. The number of books I found that met this requirement fit into a good sized book bag. But you'd need a pickup truck for the books that would appeal to a girl of the same age and reading level." -- "Why Boys Don't Read." ParentsCanada.com. Available at: <http://www.parentscanada.com/developing/tweens/articles.aspx?listingid=109>

Findings from the questionnaire survey supported the connections between regular library-skill lessons and the enhanced information-searching skills amongst the students. For example, there was an increased number of students who were able to locate the online resources provided via the school library without relying on library staff's assistance. The conclusion was that the weekly scheduled library-skill lessons had already proven to be effective in ensuring that students acquire the necessary information retrieval skills to become independent information seekers in the school library. Students in general should, therefore, have no problem locating NSWL via the library homepage on their own. However, it was important to note that the enhanced and independent library/information skills did not necessarily lead to an increase in reading motivation amongst the students. Classroom teachers and school librarians should not expect young students to initiate borrowing books from the school library to read on their own, because they already learned where the resources were and how to find them. It was obvious that students' reading motivation was built upon other factors. All this information will be proven valuable for interpreting and understanding NSWL's usage patterns, which will be addressed in the subsequent chapter (Chapter 5).

The findings in Chapter 4 indicated a noticeable decline in the numbers of boys involved in voluntary reading, after being exposed to NSWL five months later. In addition, student responses to the questionnaires and interviews used in this study revealed valuable insights into the factors that motivate students to read. The findings have led to the conclusion that reading motivation is multifaceted, and it appeared that the library and home environment, availability and choice of reading materials, gendered differences, and opportunity and access were all central to whether or not students chose to read voluntarily at school and at home.

Both qualitative and quantitative results revealed differences in reading practices between boys and girls in terms of their reading-material preferences. The conclusion was also drawn that girls tended to read more voluntarily and used the school library more often, and they were therefore better and more successful readers. Finally, girls also read more other genres. By contrast, boys as a group read less, and also read a narrower range of genres. Boys chose certain books, simply because they feature men or boys as the main character or because of their action-oriented stories.

The focus group interviews also provided an occasion for me to explore with the students their gendered tendencies, particularly ways that both boys and girls negotiate gendered boundaries in their reading. Children’s assumptions seemed to be based on the content of the books, and they tended to categorize and select books in highly gendered ways. The interviews with the school librarians also revealed that there were other students who did not voluntarily come to the school library for various reasons, but this did not necessarily mean that they were not reading. Different children just had different learning styles and reading preferences. For example, some children preferred to obtain books from other avenues, such as the bookmobiles and public libraries, or via personal purchases and gifts, and so on. Meanwhile, some students felt more ‘relaxed’ reading at home, given students began to see the school library as a place for ‘work’, rather than for ‘leisure’ reading. Meanwhile, other students might prefer books in electronic format - with the interactive facilities, students could easily access the online resources directly from home.

All findings addressed in Chapter 4 are summarized as follows:

(Table 4.12) Chapter 4: Summary of Findings			
Sections	Research Questions	Findings	Data Sources
4.2. What were the overall changes in students’ school library usage, environment and reading practice before and after the introduction of NSWL?			
4.2.1.	What were the overall changes in usage frequencies and nature of library visits amongst the students?	<p>Number of students visited school library daily and monthly decreased.</p> <p>Number of students used library for ‘fun’ decreased.</p> <p>Book-borrowing rates amongst students also decreased.</p> <p>Reasons for decreases - increased amount of formal commitments imposed by curricula, resulted in disinclination in voluntary reading.</p>	<p>Pre- and Post-Questionnaire surveys</p> <p>Interviews with school librarians</p>
4.2.2.	What were students’ overall ratings of school-library environment, library instructions and services in relations to their voluntary reading?	<p>Number of students using library for work increased.</p> <p>Increased number of students described the library as “<i>quiet place where I can concentrate and do my</i></p>	Same as above

¹⁶⁶ OPAC – Online Public Access Catalogue or library computer catalogue.

		<p>work”.</p> <p>Students became more self-reliant in searching, (e.g., having mastered basic library skills, including locating materials via OPAC¹⁶⁶.)</p> <p>Enhanced library skills did not lead to improvement in motivation amongst students.</p> <p>Changes in library climate resulted in students beginning viewing school library as a place for formal learning than ‘leisure’ reading.</p>	
4.2.3.	What were the changes in students’ reading practices?	<p>No apparent changes in students’ reading preferences after introduction of NSWL.</p> <p>Fiction books: 1st Choice: Adventures/Fantasy books 2nd Choice: Detective books 3rd Choice: Horror books</p> <p>Non-fiction books: 1st Choice: Animal books 2nd Choice: History books 3rd Choice: General science books</p>	Same as above
4.3. Comparison of gendered differences in voluntary reading before and after the introduction of NSWL			
4.3.1.	What were the differences gendered differences in voluntary reading?	<p>Due to cultural expectations, girls in general were more positive about reading than boys. Girls tended to read more voluntarily. Girls read more fiction and poetry. Girls also tended to be better readers.</p> <p>By contrast, boys read less, read more non-fiction.</p>	Same as above
4.4. Further interrogating students’ reading practices and gendered differences			
4.4.	What were the major factors central to reading motivational?	<p>Choice, opportunity and access to books, home environment and parental guidance were factors central to reading motivation.</p> <p>Avid readers took more initiatives to obtain books from different avenues. They also chose to participate in various literacy-related activities and become self-directed in reading.</p> <p>Gendered differences in reading – student interview results were consistent with the questionnaire results. Girls tended to ignore gendered boundaries, and read wider genres.</p> <p>Boys read narrower genres, and also</p>	Student focus group interviews

		read more comics and more non-fiction books. Boys refused to read books featuring girl protagonists or feminine themes.	
--	--	---	--

4.6. Conclusion to Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, in addition to using the student questionnaire data to report on the nature and overall directions of changes in students’ reading practices and their school-library usage, I analyzed and highlighted the distinctive gendered differences in students’ reading preferences. In Chapter 5, I will make use of the statistical data generated from the software programme to determine NSWL’s actual usage frequencies amongst the students. Furthermore, I make use of the Post-Questionnaire survey data and the student interview results to determine NSWL’s actual usage population, as well as students’ actual user experiences. The reading motivational factors and other gendered issues identified in Chapter 4 will also be used as criteria for evaluating NSWL’s effectiveness as a learning tool in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CHOSEN AUDIO RESOURCE: ANALYSIS OF USAGE RESULTS AND USER EXPERIENCES FROM POST-QUESTIONNAIRE AND STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 set out to report on overall changes concerning students' school-library usage and user behaviours to determine whether it was possible to see shifts in students' reading practices following being exposed to the chosen audio resource (Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL)). In this chapter I report on NSWL's actual usage and user behaviours amongst the same group of students (see Section 3.3). As concluded in Chapter 4, library and home environment, and the interaction of choice, opportunity and access of books were factors central to whether or not students chose to read voluntarily. These reading motivational factors and other gender-related issues identified in Chapter 4 are used as criteria for evaluating NSWL's effectiveness or not in enhancing students' reading motivation in this chapter.

The results in Chapter 5 are presented in Sections 5.2 to 5.6. I first begin by providing background information regarding the total number of NSWL users recorded on the Post-Questionnaire, as well as the average time duration of each NSWL streaming session. It is then followed by detailed analysis (Section 5.2) on NSWL's actual usage frequencies and patterns, with usage statistics generated directly from NSWL's software, supplemented by parents' and teachers' comments on NSWL's content coverage, as well as its functionalities. In the third to fifth sections (Sections 5.3 to 5.5), I then make use of the quantitative results from the Post-Questionnaire survey to determine NSWL's usage patterns and user behaviours amongst the students. In the sixth section, I make use of both quantitative data from the Post-Questionnaire survey and the qualitative data gathered from the student interviews conducted at the two school sites to reflect on NSWL's usage and user behaviours.

Before going into the actual data reporting, readers should be reminded that the data collection process encountered some technical constraints. These constraints were

caused mainly by the limitations of the NSWL software design, as well as the unexpected network failure that occurred at Kingston School between February and March 2007¹⁶⁷ (see Chapter 3).

5.2. NSWL's Usage Frequencies and Patterns: Analysis of Results from NSWL Software

This section reports on NSWL's actual usage frequencies and patterns, based on the statistical data generated directly from the NSWL software, as well as classroom teachers' and parents' views drawn from the Teacher- and Parent-Questionnaire. As mentioned previously, the NSWL software is unable to generate data that enabled me to determine whether individual login sessions belonged to the same or different users. The usage statistics from the NSWL software clearly indicated that there was a group of students using NSWL for regular 'pleasure' reading after school. Based on the monthly usage statistics generated from the NSWL software, a majority of the streaming activities occurred after school, and the average duration of each streaming session was 45 minutes.¹⁶⁸ As for Bradbury School, the streaming statistics (in terms of most-listened-to NSWL titles) corresponded directly to the reading incentive programme *NSWL Competition* organized by the Bradbury Librarian (see Section 3.6.1).

5.2.1. Analysis of usage results from NSWL Software

This section features a series of tabled statistics generated from the NSWL software. These statistics provide a comprehensive view of NSWL's streaming activities at the two school sites during the research period¹⁶⁹ (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2). NSWL's usage frequencies indicated that most of the streaming activities occurred at students'

¹⁶⁷ Technical Constraints - for details regarding the above major technical constraints occurred during the course of this research study, please refer to the methodology chapter (Chapter 3).

¹⁶⁸ Students' Average Concentration Span and Duration of Average NSWL Listening/Streaming Session - based on the statistical results generated directly from NSWL's software programme, the Bradbury School students spent an average of 41 minutes per session listening to NSWL, whereas the duration of an average streaming session for the Kingston School students was 48 minutes. In other words, the overall average was 45 minutes/session. In comparison, the duration of a regular lesson at both schools was 55 minutes. For Bradbury School, the streaming statistics (in terms of most-listened-to NSWL titles) corresponded directly to the reading incentive programme *NSWL Competition* organized by the Bradbury Librarian (see Section 3.6.1).

¹⁶⁹ Research Period - from October 2006 to April 2007.

homes after school¹⁷⁰, rather than at the school library. The statistics also indicated that a high percentage of the streaming activities actually occurred on weekends, as well as on public and school holidays.¹⁷¹ In other words, the results conveyed the notion that a group of students from both schools had taken the initiative to use NSWL for ‘pleasure’ after school, even without direct supervision from both school librarians and teachers. In order to measure ‘true’ motivation for voluntary reading, the teachers and the school librarians deliberately avoided making the use of NSWL as part of school assignments during the research period. For Bradbury School, during the research period, the average of the total audio-clips streamed was **289** clips per month. Out of these 289 clips, 57.8% occurred after 3:00 P.M. (that is, after all lessons ended). It should also be highlighted that out of these 289 clips streamed, 33.2% occurred on weekends, or school and public holidays (see Table 5.1), while for Kingston School, from December 2006¹⁷² to April 2007, the overall average of the total audio-clips streamed¹⁷³ was 183 clips per month (see Table 5.2). Out of these 183 clips streamed, 60.7% occurred after school, and 25.7% occurred on weekends, or school and other public holidays.

<div>(Table 5.1)</div> <div>Bradbury School – NSWL Monthly Usage</div> <div>(Number of Potential Users – 240 approx¹⁷⁴.)</div>						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	# audio-clips streamed:	Total logins:	Ave. login time / session:	# audio-clips streamed after 3:00 P.M.	# audio-clips streamed on weekends, public/school holidays	# audio-book streamed:
2006						
Oct.	21 ¹⁷⁵	7 hr. 34 min.	23 min.	N.A.	0	11
Nov.	154 ¹⁷⁶	30 hr. 54 min.	35 min.	29	13	54
Dec.	486	42 hr. 35 min.	44 min.	377	242	15
2007						
Jan.	299	24 hr. 6 min.	42 min.	215	11	28
Feb.	247	48 hr. 58 min.	45 min.	157	112	20
Mar.	391	47 hr. 40 min.	37 min.	194	125	48
Apr.	159	20 hr. 8 min.	40 min.	27	70	22
Overall Ave. ¹⁷⁷	289	35 hr. 7. min.	41 min.	167	96	31
Overall % of clips streamed after 3:00 P.M.		▪ 57.8% (out of 289 clips)				
Overall % of clips streamed on holidays		▪ 33.2% (out of 289 clips streamed)				

¹⁷⁰ At both Bradbury and Kingston International School, all lessons finish at 3:00 P.M.

¹⁷¹ School and public holidays included Christmas, New Year and Chinese New Year, and so on.

¹⁷² NSWL was launched at Kingston School one month later than Bradbury School.

¹⁷³ Excluding both February and March 2007, as the NSWL service was interrupted by Kingston Library’s network malfunction.

¹⁷⁴ **Number of Potential Users** - At Bradbury, all 1st- to 4th-grade students also knew about NSWL, and were free to use it. But based on Bradbury Librarian’s knowledge, the vast majority of NSWL users were 5th and 6th-grade students (approximately 240 students), as promotional efforts were aimed mainly at 5th and 6th-grade students only.

¹⁷⁵ **Trial Use for Teachers** - October 2006 – NSWL trial use period for teachers and the school librarian only.

¹⁷⁶ **Launching Date** - NSWL was launched to the students at Bradbury in November 2006.

¹⁷⁷ NOT including the trial use period.

(Table 5.2) Kingston School – NSWL Monthly Usage (# Potential Users – 70 approx. ¹⁷⁸)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	# audio-clips streamed:	Total logins:	Ave. login time / session:	# audio-clips streamed after 3:00 P.M.	# audio-clips streamed on weekends, public/school holidays	# audio- books streamed:
2006						
Oct.	1	3 min.	3 min.	0	1	1
Nov.	0 ¹⁷⁹	0	0	0	0	0
Dec.	431 ¹⁸⁰	67 hr. 7 min.	47 min.	240	113	51
2007						
Jan.	58	26 hr. 5 min.	41 min.	43	18	10
Feb. ¹⁸¹	21	3 hr. 40 min.	28 min.	21	5	4
Mar.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apr.	60	18 hr. 9 min.	57 min.	51	11	11
Overall Ave.¹⁸²	183	37 hr.	48 min.	111	47	24
Overall % of clips streamed after 3:00 P.M.		• 60.7% (out of 183 clips)				
Overall % of clips streamed on holidays		• 25.7% (out of 183 clips)				

Based on the streaming statistics shown in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, it was not possible to determine whether there were any steady inclines or declines in NSWL’s usage during the research period because usage frequencies tended to fluctuate from month to month. Interviews with the school librarians led to the conclusion that such fluctuations were caused by various short and long school and public holidays throughout the research period. The school librarians also pointed out that there might be other interruptions, for example, failure in Internet access, and other major school events, for example, sports day, examinations, or other school activities, such as *Book Week*¹⁸³, that directly influenced NSWL’s actual usage. As concluded in Chapter 4, independent reading was a casualty of intensely academic schooling, and the fluctuations found in the NSWL streaming activities further supported the notion that a majority of students had other formal commitments imposed by the curricula, leading to varying amounts of time spent and changes in the inclination for voluntary reading.

¹⁷⁸ **Number of Potential Users** - at Kingston, all 1st- to 4th-grade students also knew about NSWL, and were free to use it. But based on Bradbury Librarian’s knowledge, the vast majority of NSWL users were 5th- and 6th-grade students (approximately 70 students), as promotional efforts were aimed at mainly 5th-grade and 6th-grade students.

¹⁷⁹ **Trial Use for Teachers** - October and November 2006 – NSWL trial use period for teachers and the school librarian only.

¹⁸⁰ **Launching Date** - NSWL was launched to the students at Kingston in December 2006, which is one month later the Bradbury, due to maternity leave taken by the Kingston Librarian from October to November 2006.

¹⁸¹ **Reason for Low Usage Statistics:** Kingston’s usage statistics in February 2007 were disregarded and not included in the comparison. As Kingston School’s system broke down for over two weeks, students could not access NSWL via the school library or from home.

¹⁸² NOT including trial use period.

¹⁸³ *Book Week* was another major extra-curricular activity (not related to NSWL) launched at Bradbury School Library, aiming to promote literacy and reading amongst all the students during the research period.

5.2.2. Teachers' and parents' views on NSWL's usage and applications

Teachers and other library staff from both Bradbury and Kingston School also completed the questionnaires assessing students' levels of motivation and confidence, and giving their opinions of NSWL in relation to the classroom practice (see Appendices 3 and 5). Favourable comments were received from both school-library staff and teachers, stating that NSWL had the potential to complement classroom practice and literacy instructions.¹⁸⁴ Supportive of Byrom's findings, the Bradbury and Kingston teachers agreed that students could benefit from tracking an audio reading made by a highly skilled reader who modeled intonation and nuance, read fluently and accurately, and observed the conventions of punctuations. The main feature of audio-books is that they do not only give the reluctant readers a taste of silent reading, but they also have the potential to actively engage the reader in the text so that reading is stimulated.¹⁸⁵ A few teachers also remarked that NSWL was very useful in giving hints to encourage independent word identification.

5.3. NSWL's Content Coverage and Relevance of Classics to Children

Interviews with the two school librarians revealed that the process of integrating NSWL into the classrooms illustrated complexity and tensions inherent in implementing instructional changes within the set curricula. Other important issues arising from this study is the relationship between the reading-ability level and the appropriateness of the literature inside NSWL. For example, many of the NSWL titles were too advanced for elementary-level students. A large portion of the literature inside NSWL was out-of-copyright classics, lacking pictures, and containing too many "hard" or "unfamiliar" words. To further illustrate teachers' comments regarding the reading-ability level and the appropriateness/suitability of the literature for elementary-level students inside NSWL, out of all 429 titles of audio-books from

¹⁸⁴ Many classroom teachers at Bradbury and Kingston recognized that using online audio-books in the class provided support for students in a variety of ways. For example, when the classroom teachers and school library staff were asked to rate NSWL's effectiveness as a learning tool on a 1 to 5 (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) scale on the Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire, the results are as follows: 83% of teacher respondents rated "Neutral", when asked if they thought NSWL had a positive impact on students' overall learning; meanwhile, 83% of teachers rated "Agree", when asked if NSWL would create positive attitudes towards reading among students; 80% of them rated "Agree", when asked if sound effects and background music had resulted in improvement of reading and listening comprehension performance of students; 83% of them rated "Agree", when asked if listening to NSWL was a good and effective way to improve students' vocabulary and usage of English; and 60% of them "Agreed" that their school libraries should continue to subscribe to NSWL if budget allows.

¹⁸⁵ BYROM, Gillie. (1998) "If You Can't Read it Then Audio Read It." *Reading*, July, pp. 3-7.

NSWL (as of September 2006), only about **120** of them were listed under the children-literature categories (see Table 5.3). In other words, only **28%** of the entire NSWL collection catered especially for the elementary-school level.

(Table 5.3) NSWL's Content Statistics ¹⁸⁶	
Categories of NSWL Literature	No. of Titles
▪ Total number of NSWL titles:	429
▪ <i>Children's Classics:</i>	15
▪ <i>Junior Classic Fiction:</i>	44
▪ <i>Junior History:</i>	7
▪ <i>Junior Non-Fiction:</i>	8
▪ <i>Music Education:</i>	46
▪ Titles suitable for 5 th -/6 th -grade students:	120
▪ Remaining titles under the following sections ¹⁸⁷ :	309

According to the school librarians, even if we educators accept the view that the classics have literary value or significance within our society, this does not necessarily mean that children themselves will automatically find them interesting, as they further explained:

Bradbury Librarian: *"It would be good for NSWL to include more contemporary materials, rather than restricted to out-of-copyright works. Would prefer to be able to subscribe just to children's content – much of the material is too advanced for primary schools. Classics such as the ones available inside NSWL deal with compelling themes. It is very important for boys and girls to learn about Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, but to most primary boys, they could be either too difficult or very boring. I understand it is important that they read these literary classics and learn something about them. But if these are the only books they are reading, they can get very turned off. I think many of them would get turned off by even just looking at these titles."*

Kingston Librarian: *"I also agreed that many of the NSWL titles available inside NSWL are far too advanced for elementary students. Most of the students simply don't have the patience to go through a long list of adult-level literature such as Jane Austen or Shakespeare, with the hope of finding something that they find attractive to read. In addition, many of these stories take place in a completely different time and place, that might not be relevant to our modern-day society. I think they really should have a separate database or interface catered specially for children."*

¹⁸⁶ Data as of September 2006.

¹⁸⁷ Remaining session belong to the following categories: *Classic Fiction, Great Epics and Tales, Arts, Biographies, History, Literature, Music Biographies, Philosophy, Religion, Sports, Shakespeare, Poetry, Anthologies*, and so on.

Students may become more interested in reading when they are able to see the connections between books and their own lives.¹⁸⁸ Thus, children may subscribe to the view that reading classics is more of a 'duty' than a 'pleasure'.¹⁸⁹

According to Meek, it should be noted that the nature of our society is likely to have an effect on the character and definition of the classics. It should also be remembered that classics play different roles in different cultures, and the changing demography of children is making us realize that our multicultural society must find itself reflected in books for children.¹⁹⁰ Such a reflection would be difficult to detect in texts written by "dead, white, European males" but might be present in modern classics.¹⁹¹ Maynard, McKnight and Keady also pointed out that even if we accept the view that the classics have literary value or significance within our society, this does not necessarily mean that children themselves will automatically find them interesting.¹⁹² Liz Waterland¹⁹³ discusses the school of thought that claims that *classics*, such as A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) have no relevance for "*'today's' children, that his books are middle-class and sweet, that they are full of inaccessible language and morality and have no place in a modern city child's experience*".¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, the lack of knowledge of the classics might be caused by the traditional image of such works - that they are rather long and difficult to read - so that children are discouraged from reading them. Additionally, the image of classics as long and complex is not likely to appeal to children who are accustomed to media other than print, such as television,

¹⁸⁸ AU, K.H. and T.E. RAPHEL. (2000) "Equity and Literacy in the Next Millennium." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 170-188.

¹⁸⁹ JAMES, P. D. (1993, 14th June) "English Must Be Saved." *Times*, pp. 14.

¹⁹⁰ MEEK, Margaret. (1991) *On Being Literate*. London: Bodley Head.

¹⁹¹ MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) "Children's Classics in the Electronic Medium." *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 187.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 189.

¹⁹³ According to Liz Waterland, "*The first and greatest value is certainly the new worlds that were opened for them and the willingness with which they entered those worlds... Second comes the value of offering children books in their original form and language and the demands this makes on them. There is no doubt that their language was enriched and their understanding of the unfamiliar deepened... Third, I value the links the children have begun to forge with their literary roots. Books like Alice are part of a heritage that fewer children nowadays have access to. It is important that children should make connections when they hear people say, 'He's a real Scrooge' or 'God bless us every one'... Lastly and perhaps most satisfying of all, there is the value that children themselves found in the books, and that led them to want to go on exploring the worlds they had entered. Many children found copies of the book I was reading and read along with me or at home.*" - "Teaching Literature at KS 1-2: Values and Classic Children's Books." *ITE English*. Available at: http://www.ite.org.uk/ite_topics/litks12/007.php

¹⁹⁴ MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) "Children's Classics in the Electronic Medium." *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 189.

cinema, video and computer games, as everyday tools.¹⁹⁵ Students' experiences with literature inside NSWL are further analyzed in the preceding sections in this chapter.

5.4. NSWL Usage and Ratings: Analysis of Results from Post-Questionnaire

While the previous sections addressed NSWL's actual usage, and content coverage, this section returns to the data gathered from the Post-Questionnaire survey and which is made up of students' responses to NSWL's functionalities (see Appendix 2). The overall results from the Post-Questionnaire, Section E were that out of all 260 respondents, 136 of them indicated they had used NSWL; 43% users preferred using NSWL at home; and a majority of users had positive user experiences. For example, results indicated that a majority of users (37.2% said "Sometimes"; 33.3% said "Yes") 'enjoyed' using NSWL, and a majority of users thought NSWL's background music and sound effects had helped them understand the text. 37% of users said NSWL was "easy and interesting" to use. Finally, given NSWL's versatility and its convenient online format, over half of the respondents (50.8%) preferred stories to be told by a live person than NSWL, due to various social and sentimental reasons. A small number of users also indicated that NSWL was "boring". I now share details of the student Post-Questionnaire survey results.

5.4.1. NSWL overall user population

For this study, it was important to understand the overall user population. As mentioned previously, NSWL software was unable to generate data that enabled me to determine whether individual login sessions belonged to the same or different users. As a result, we turned to Post-Questionnaire item 17, *Do you use NSWL in school library/at home?* to measure NSWL usage (see Tables 5.4 and 5.5). The results indicated that out of all 260 Post-Questionnaire respondents, 136 (52%) of them said they had used NSWL.

¹⁹⁵ MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) "Children's Classics in the Electronic Medium." *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 189.

(Table 5.4) 17. Do you use NSWL in school library? (n=136)	
▪ Sometimes	44 users
▪ Yes	17 users
▪ Total	61 school users

(Table 5.5) 18. Do you use NSWL at Home? (n=136)	
▪ Sometimes	49 users
▪ Yes	26 users
▪ Total	75 home users

Amongst these 136 NSWL users, 61¹⁹⁶ of them were school-library users, as opposed to 75¹⁹⁷ home users¹⁹⁸ (see Tables 5.4 and 5.5). As identified in Chapter 4, opportunity and access both play important roles in motivating students to read voluntarily.¹⁹⁹ The results in Section 5.2 (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2) indicated that a high percentage of the streaming activities occurred in the evening after both schools were closed. Such evidence further supported the notion that in some instances (assuming a computer is available) NSWL has an advantage over paper-books in that it offers users instant and convenient access to reading materials, even allowing the same title to be shared by different users at different locations concurrently. NSWL therefore possesses greater potential in motivating students to read via improving access and opportunity to reading materials.

5.4.2. Home users versus school users

It was also important to establish whether the students preferred using NSWL at home or at the school library, or at a combination of both places. This question helped examine the extent to which environment might mediate the actual usage of NSWL. Having taken this issue into consideration, Post-Questionnaire item 28, *Do you prefer to listen to NSWL at school or at home?* (see Table 5.6) sought to find out whether

¹⁹⁶ A total number of 61 student respondents who said they would use NSWL, 44 NSWL users said "Sometimes" used NSWL at School Library; while remaining 17 of them said "Yes" to using NSWL at school.

¹⁹⁷ A total number of 75 student respondents who said they would use NSWL, 49 NSWL users said "Sometimes" used NSWL at home; while remaining 26 of them said "Yes" to using it at home.

¹⁹⁸ In other words, out of all 136 NSWL users, 45% were school-library users; remaining 55% were home users.

¹⁹⁹ KRASHEN, S. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited ; WORTHY, J. (1998) "On Every Page Someone Gets Killed!" Book Conversations You Don't Hear in School." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Vol. 41, No. 7, pp. 508-517 ; PRICHARD, Lyn. (May, 2000) "Understanding the Reluctant Male Reader: Implications for the Teacher Librarian and the School Library." *Access*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 11-14.

NSWL had the potential to promote more voluntary reading at home, especially when the library staff were witnessing a decline in the number of students borrowing books from the library for ‘pleasure reading’, for the reason that an increasing number of students saw the library as a place for ‘work’ instead of ‘fun’.

(Table 5.6)	
28. Do you prefer to listen to NSWL at the school library or at home?	
(n=136)	
	%
▪ School library	34.5
▪ Home	43.4
▪ Both places	22.1
▪ Total	100.0

Librarians and teachers frequently expect independent reading to occur at home.²⁰⁰ Moreover, as concluded in Chapter 4, increasing students’ access to books can significantly influence students’ reading motivation.²⁰¹ The results indicated that a majority of students preferred using NSWL at home while only 22% said at both places (see Table 5.6). As mentioned in Section 4.2, the notion that the school library is seen as a place for formal learning, rather than personal pursuits, was likely to be caused by the increasing amount of formal instructions imposed by the curricula. This might be the core reason that a majority of users preferred using NSWL at home. Other reasons why a higher number of users preferred accessing NSWL from home are analyzed in the student interview section (Section 5.6.1).

5.4.3. Self-Selection versus selections from adults

As mentioned in Section 4.2, the role of choice in general, and reading motivation in particular, is well recognized.²⁰² Post-Questionnaire item 24, *Do you rely on your parents or teachers to choose what books to listen to from NSWL?* and item 25, *Do you prefer to choose your own books from NSWL?* (see Tables 5.7 and 5.8) sought

²⁰⁰ WALMSLEY, S.A. (1991) “Literacy in the Elementary Classroom.” in E.M. JENNINGS and A.C. PURVES. (eds.) *Literate Systems and Individual Lives: Perspectives on Literacy and Schooling*. (pp. 139-164) Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.

²⁰¹ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996) “Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; PALMER, B.M., R.M. CODLING and L.B. GAMBRELL. (1994) “In Their Own Words: What Elementary Students Have to Say About Motivation to Read.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 176-178.

²⁰² SPAULDING, C.C. (1992) “The Motivation to Read and Write.” in J.W. IRWIN and M.A. DOYLE. (eds.) *Reading/Writing Connections: Learning from Research*. (pp. 177-201). Newark, D.E.: International Reading Association.

to determine whether the preference for self-selection also applied to the use of NSWL amongst students, and hopefully, would lead to more ‘enjoyable’ user experiences. The results indicated most students preferred to choose their own books from NSWL, as opposed to 17.7% said “No” (see Table 5.8). Only 3.8% of users indicated that they preferred parents and teachers to choose books for them from NSWL (see Table 5.7). Such findings further supported the notion that for students to become independent and engaged readers, they need to read self-selected books²⁰³, and choice increases the students’ interest in books and motivates them to read.²⁰⁴ Self-selection included selection of topics that match students’ reading interests.

(Table 5.7) 24. Do you rely on your parents or teachers to choose what books to listen to from NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
▪ No	64.6
▪ Sometimes	31.5
▪ Yes	3.8
▪ Total	100

(Table 5.8) 25. Do you prefer to choose your own books from NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
▪ No	17.7
▪ Sometimes	16.9
▪ Yes	65.4
▪ Total	100

5.4.4. Live storytelling

Post-Questionnaire item 29, *Do your parents still read paper-books to you at home?* (see Table 5.9) sought to find out the percentage of NSWL users who still depended on parents to read to them at home, with the aim to determine whether NSWL could serve as an automated substitute for parents reading aloud. As mentioned in Section 4.4, parents are the first teachers and the home is the first and most important

²⁰³ FIELDING, L.G. and P.D. PEARSON. (1994) “Reading Comprehension: What Works.” *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 51, No.5, pp. 62-68.

²⁰⁴ MCCARTHY, S.J., J.V. HOFFMAN and L. GALDA. (1999) “Readers in Elementary Classrooms: Learning Goals and Instructional Principles that Can Inform Practice.” in J.T. GUTHIRE and D.E. ALVERMAN. (eds.) *Engaged Reading: Processes, Practices, and Policy Implications*. (pp. 46-80) New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press ; TUNNELL, M.A. and J.S. JACOBS. (1989) “Using “Real” Books: Research Findings on Literature Based Reading Instruction.” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 42, No. 6, pp. 470-477 ; WORTHY, J. (2002) “What Makes Intermediate-Grade Students Want to Read?” *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 6, pp. 568-569 ; WORTHY, J., M. MOORMAN and M. TURNER. (1999) “What Johnny Likes to Read is Hard to Find in School.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 12-27.

influence on the learning of children²⁰⁵, and children’s audio-books have often been castigated as convenient time-savers for working mothers.²⁰⁶ The results indicated that the majority of NSWL users did not have a parent read to them. Interviews with the school librarians revealed that reading stories to young children in person would not only guide them to love reading, but that it could also enhance parent-child interactions, and this could also be further extended to disseminate stories as to disseminate love. However, by 5th- and 6th-grade, most students have already outgrown the idea of having parents read to them for either learning or parent-child relationship reasons. Despite this, the school librarians were still pleased to learn that a small number of parents still took the efforts to read to their children at home. According to the school librarians, given NSWL is conveniently available twenty-four hours per day, such online resources could be used creatively by both teachers and parents to complement storytelling by adults, or could even serve as a convenient substitute for busy parents, helping them gradually convert the children from passive, dependent listeners to proactive, self-selecting voluntary readers.

(Table 5.9)	
29. Do your parents still read books to you at home?	
(n=136)	
	%
▪ No	63.3
▪ Sometimes	27.5
▪ Yes	9.2
▪ Total	100.0

5.4.5. Average number of audio-books read

Similar to library-usage frequencies and book-borrowing rates, the amount of NSWL titles listened to by users also served as a good indicator for determining the amount of reading carried out by the students, as it was also directly linked to ‘enjoyable’ experiences as NSWL users. Post-Questionnaire item 31, *What is the total number of NSWL titles listened within the last 30 days?* (see Table 5.10) sought to find out the average number of titles listened by individual users. Amongst the same group of NSWL users, a majority of them (72.2%) said they had read one to three audio-books within the last thirty days. Although the figures did not take account of the length of

²⁰⁵ BANDURA, A. (1997) *Self-Efficacy: the Exercise of Control*. New York, N.Y.: W.H. Freeman and Company ; MORROW, L. (ed.) (1995) *Family Literacy: Connections in Schools and Communities*. New Jersey: International Reading Association Incorporation.

²⁰⁶ KOZLOFF, Sarah. (1995) “Audio Books in a Visual Culture.” *Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 83-109.

time listened to each NSWL title, the school librarians were pleased to learn that NSWL was attractive enough to ‘lure’ many users to repeat their listening experience. The finding that 8.3% of users had listened to more than ten titles exceeded the librarians’ initial expectations.

(Table 5.10)	
31. Total # of NSWL titles listened within last 30 Days	
(n=136)	
# of titles	%
▪ 1-3	72.2%
▪ 4-6	13.9%
▪ 7-10	5.6%
▪ > 10	8.3%
▪ Total	100.0%

5.4.6. Students’ experiences with NSWL

Post-Questionnaire item 19-A, *Do you enjoy listening to NSWL in your free time?* and item 20, *Do you think NSWL is easy to use?* (see Tables 5.11 and 5.12) sought to measure students’ attitudes towards using NSWL, with the aim to determine whether students had an ‘enjoyable’ user experience. The results were that out of all 136 NSWL users, only 33.3% said “Yes”, they did ‘enjoy’ using NSWL, while 37.2% said “Sometimes” enjoyed using it. On the other hand, 29.5% said “No” (see Table 5.11). Meanwhile, 37.2% said they found NSWL, “Easy and interesting”; 17.8% said it was “Easy but boring”; while only 0.8% of users said it was “Too difficult” (see Table 5.12).

(Table 5.11)	
19 - Part A. Do you enjoy listening to NSWL in your free time?	
(n=136)	
	%
▪ No	29.5
▪ Sometimes	37.2
▪ Yes	33.3
▪ Total	100.0

(Table 5.12) 20. Do you think NSWL is easy to use? (NSWL User-Friendliness) (n=136)	
	%
▪ About the right level	25.6
▪ Don't know	18.6
▪ Easy and interesting	37.2
▪ Easy but boring	17.8
▪ Too difficult	0.8
▪ Total	100.0

5.4.7. Reasons students 'enjoyed' using NSWL

Post-Questionnaire item 19-B sought to ask respondents to explain whether or not they 'enjoyed' using NSWL. Thirty-one respondents gave positive feedbacks about their user experiences. According to some of the comments recorded on the Post-Questionnaire, students 'enjoyed' using NSWL because:

"Sometimes I can learn more words."

"It reads for you and sometimes when you don't know the words they read it for you."

"You can listen and read at the same time."

"I don't have to buy the book."

Students' comments revealed that using NSWL helped support their vocabulary development and enhanced acquisition of the English language. Such evidence was echoed by Samuels, who suggested that talking-books provided unique opportunities to develop comprehension and fluency that are similar to those benefits reported for repeated readings of traditional text.²⁰⁷ Students' feedback further supported teachers' comments regarding NSWL's capability in providing model reading, and its potential to actively engage the reader in the text so that reading is stimulated.²⁰⁸ Furthermore, students' comment "because I don't have to buy the book" supported the notion that NSWL has the potential to improve opportunity and access to reading materials that is also a factor central to students' reading motivation.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ SAMUELS, S. Jay. (1997) "The Methods of Repeated Readings." *The Reading Teachers*, Vol. 50, No. 5, pp. 376-381.

²⁰⁸ BYROM, Gillie. (1998) "If You Can't Read it Then Audio Read It." *Reading*, July, pp. 3-7.

²⁰⁹ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996) "Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; PALMER, B.M., R.M.

5.4.8. Relevance of classics to children and their experiences of classics

Meanwhile, Post-Questionnaire item 19-B recorded comments from another thirty-five students regarding their not-so-positive user experiences. Some said they would not use NSWL because they were too “busy”, while others indicated that they preferred other games or reading a paper-book instead, for example:

“I always have works to do so I don’t have any free time.”

“I like reading books instead.”

“I always love to sit and play games with my sister Valerie.”

Based on the comments from all thirty-five respondents, ten of them said “it was boring”. According to the school librarians, many NSWL titles were simply too advanced for the elementary-level students. In addition, there is a great lack of contemporary materials. As mentioned in Section 5.2, only 28% of the entire NSWL collection catered especially for the elementary-school level (see Table 5.3). Interviews with the librarians revealed that even many of those classed as “children’s classics” were really meant for teenagers rather than primary-aged children. Many of the audio-book titles, including style, vocabulary and structure are not related to the readers’ age and level of experience and the stories of such literary classics literature often convey genteel and noble values that do not apply to modern society. For example, over the last century, concepts such as morality, virtue, service, honour and duty have fallen out of favour, while really substantial alternatives are often wanting. As a result, it may be difficult for the children to make connections between their current interests and the story, as the students could not relate themselves to the story which happened in times and places that they cannot experience. Most importantly, many of these classic titles contain too many unfamiliar words, comprehension of text (and with it ‘enjoyment’) inevitably suffers, and true reading therefore could not take place (see Section 5.3). For example, one of the teaching staff at Kingston School indicated on the questionnaire:

"Some of my students who have tried to use NSWL told me that they don't like it because it is boring and they can't find the topics that they are really interested in. Many of the audio-books are either too advanced or too old."

Further analysis of NSWL's content coverage enabled me to realize that integrating the use of NSWL into the library curricula did not only mean introducing a new format of reading materials to the students, but also included exposing these young students to a new set of European or Anglo-American cultural norms, values, meanings, and symbols upon which a majority of the NSWL literature is based. Inside the audio-book stories from NSWL, the ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone in the European societies, as well as the varying behaviours and intonation patterns that are only appropriate in one's own speech community, contrast with the students' own local Hong Kong experience. All of these new phenomena could be conceived very differently in the context of these young learners' own existing and limited cultural experience. Students may become more interested in reading when they are able to see the connections between books and their own lives.²¹⁰ As pointed out in Section 5.3, even if we accept the view that the classics have high literary values or significance within society, this does not necessarily mean that children themselves will automatically find them interesting.²¹¹ Thus, children might view reading classics as more of a 'duty' than a 'pleasure'.

5.4.9. Importance of illustrations for children literature

Interviews with the school librarians revealed another factor concerning NSWL's failure to simulate the reading interests amongst students was the lack of illustrations. Under Post-Questionnaire item 19-B, one boy student answered that he did not 'enjoy' using NSWL because, "it has no photos and is boring." Originally, I was concerned that providing pictures to aid reading would create a dependence on external clues, and therefore not encourage appropriate reading and comprehension. However, according to the school librarians, given nowadays children are bombarded by a constant stream of visual images since early childhood, in this environment, illustrations are indeed a popular feature in today's children's books. Apart from their

²¹⁰ AU, K.H. and T.E. RAPHEL. (2000) "Equity and Literacy in the Next Millennium." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 170-188.

²¹¹ Ibid., 189.

entertainment value, good illustrations could be a useful tool in learning to read, providing clues that help in decoding the text. The Bradbury Librarian also pointed out that illustrations could be suggestive to the young minds, filling in the necessary details for these young children to fully exercise their imagination. The requests for illustrations from the NSWL users were echoed with the concept of multimodal learning model (see Section 2.5). That is given the recent turn towards virtual connectivity has led to a rapid growth of texts becoming available in digital form, the reading practices amongst children are increasingly less exclusively textual, but more towards a total integration of complex iconography of picture, symbols, moving images, and sound embedded in a background environment to support the actual reading process.²¹² Furthermore, children do not read the language and then the pictures and then listen to the sounds; rather, they take them in a *gestalt*, a whole, all at once.²¹³ Thus, it was no surprise to find some students expressing their disappointment when they found a lack of visual illustrations inside NSWL.

5.4.10. NSWL versus paper-books

As mentioned in Section 2.6, talking-book software can support an integrated approach to literacy instruction by providing exposure to text in an alternative format and opportunities for contextualized instruction²¹⁴, as electronic-book represents the combination of the advantages of the paper-book, particular with the capabilities with the computer, and thereby offering an extra dimension that has the potential to include additional media on its pages.²¹⁵ Post-Questionnaire, item 22-A, *Do you find text under NSWL more interesting and easier to follow than other printed books?* (see Table 5.13) sought to verify these notions. The results were that 35.9% users said “Yes” to NSWL being “Interesting and easy to follow”; 47.9% said “Sometimes”; while only the remaining 16.2% said NSWL was “NOT interesting and NOT easy to follow”. In other words, the evidence confirmed that NSWL was more interesting and easier to follow compared to traditional paper-books for a majority of users.

²¹² LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) “Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary.” *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 400.

²¹³ DUNCUM, Paul. (2004) “Visual Culture Isn’t Just Visual: Multiliteracy, Multimodality and Meaning.” *Studies in Art Education*, Spring, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 259.

²¹⁴ REINKING, D. and L. BIRDWELL-BOWLES. (1991) “Computer in Reading and Writing.” in R. BARR (ed.) *Handbook of Reading Research*, Vol. 2. (pp. 310-340) New York, N.Y.: Longman ; REINKING, D. (1992). “Differences between Electronic and Printed Texts: an Agenda for Research.” *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 11-24.

²¹⁵ MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) “Children’s Classics in the Electronic Medium.” *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 184-201.

(Table 5.13) 22 – Part A. Do you find text under NSWL more interesting and easier to follow than other printed books? (n=136)	
	%
▪ No, NSWL is NOT interesting & NOT easy to follow	16.2
▪ Sometimes	47.9
▪ Yes, it is interesting & easy to follow	35.9
▪ Total	100.0

5.4.11. Reasons why students preferred one over the other

While item 22-A, asked students to compare NSWL with paper-books, item 22-B set out to find out why users preferred one over the other (see Tables 5.14 and 5.15). Twenty users indicated that they preferred and ‘enjoyed’ using NSWL, but their reasons for this ‘enjoyment’ varied widely from student to student. Although students’ explanations did not always promote literacy activities that supporting reading, several students’ comments revealed that they liked using NSWL because “you don’t need to read it”, “it is fun to use” or “it is fun to read to yourself as if somebody reading to you”. Out of these twenty keen NSWL users, eleven of them felt that using NSWL supported acquiring English, and reduced many difficulties and pressure associated with reading, for example, “it helps you with the words you don’t know how to pronounce” or “because when I hear someone reading, it is quite easy to follow” (see Table 5.14). Reading while listening to audio-books allowed students to use both modalities of reading and listening to support their development of word knowledge. It also allowed students to hear the correct pronunciation of words and supported their acquisition of the English language.²¹⁶ These positive feelings alone might directly influence their reading development, because students find reading while listening to audio-books ‘enjoyable’ and their motivation to read therefore increases.

²¹⁶ O'DAY, Pamela S. (2002) *Reading While Listening: Increasing Access to Print Through the Use of Audio Books*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Dept. of Education, Lynch Graduate School of Education, Boston College, pp. 20.

(Table 5.14) 22 – Part B. reasons why students like and dislike NSWL	
Reasons why NSWL better than paper-books (NSWL Advantages)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When I hear someone reading, it is quite easy to follow ▪ You are listening to it at the same time ▪ You don't need to read it ▪ It reads the words to you ▪ Helps you with words you don't know how to pronounce ▪ Sometimes the online text tells what to do so it's easier. 	11 217
▪ It is fun to read to yourself as if somebody reading to you.	3
▪ Writing is the right size to read ; Words are bigger / quite big.	4
▪ Sometimes I want to read the book myself but NSWL is useful if I can't find the books and get tired of reading.	1
▪ It uses the right level of words.	1
▪ Total	20

The results indicated that not all of the students preferred using NSWL. Twenty users contrasted NSWL to reading a paper-book, and expressed a preference for the latter. Several respondents described their NSWL-user experiences to be “boring”, “not convenient”, “reading too fast”, to simply “don't like it” (see Table 5.15). Some felt that not being able to control the reading speed was a problem, for example, “because I can read faster than they speak” or “because sometimes they read too fast”. Others found reading on a computer screen was uncomfortable.

(Table 5.15) Reasons why students think paper-books better than NSWL (NSWL Disadvantages)	
▪ It is a bit /so / sometimes boring ; Not fun / not interesting ; Nothing is special about it.	8
▪ It's hard and easy.	1
▪ Not (very) convenient..	2
▪ Poor quality.	1
▪ I can't use it at home because I have a Mac without WMP.	1
▪ I don't even like to read NSWL.	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ My eyes focus on the words and skip ahead sometimes. ▪ I read faster than they speak. ▪ Sometimes they read too fast. 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The font is not too small so I don't have to squint my eyes ; Online text is too bright to read ; ▪ If I read too much on the computer I get headaches. 	3
▪ Total	20

5.4.12. NSWL's background music and sound effects – efficacy in helping students understand the text

Post-Questionnaire item 26, *Do background music and sound effects in NSWL help you better understand and enjoy the stories or poems?* (Table 5.16) sought to verify whether these added features (background music and sound effects) had the ability to

²¹⁷ Total number of student respondents making the statement.

help them better understand and ‘enjoy’ the texts being read. According to Kozloff, audio-books offer ‘dramatized’ productions that specifically replicate radio aesthetics. Similar to radio drama, audio-books provide examples of aural dramatizations, of the use of sound effects, multiple performers and music, for example, horses galloping, and dramatic musical scoring.²¹⁸ The results were satisfying as a majority of respondents said that NSWL’s background music and sound effects had “Sometimes” helped them with the text (see Table 5.16). In other words, the results indicated that NSWL’s added features could actually help illustrate a storyline, as well as contribute to varying mood settings, thereby making it a ‘whole’ and yet ‘enjoyable’ reading experience.

(Table 5.16)	
26. Do background music and sound effects in NSWL help you better understand & enjoy the stories or poems?	
(n=136)	
	%
▪ No	23.4
▪ Sometimes	50.0
▪ Yes	26.6
▪ Total	100

5.4.13. NSWL versus storytelling by live person

Post-Questionnaire item 30-Part A, *Do you preferred stories be told by a live person than NSWL?* (see Table 5.17) sought to ask the students to compare their experiences as a reader, aiming to determine whether they preferred one over the other. NSWL titles are read by professional actors, but students still preferred stories be told by a live person (see Table 5.17).

(Table 5.17)	
30 – Part A. Live person versus NSWL –	
Do you preferred stories be told by a live person than NSWL?	
(n=136)	
	%
▪ No	25.0
▪ Sometimes	24.2
▪ Yes	50.8
▪ Total	100.0

²¹⁸ KOZLOFF, Sarah. (1995) “Audio Books in a Visual Culture.” *Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 83-109.

According to the students’ explanations (see Table 5.18), nine users preferred stories be told by a live person because they felt that a live storyteller can give more “expressions”, and make the story more “exciting” and more “fun”.

<div>(Table 5.18)</div> <div>30 – Part B. Reasons why students preferred stories be told by live person than NSWL?</div>	
<div> <div>▪ 38 respondents provided the following reasons why they preferred stories told by a live person:</div> </div>	
<div> <div>▪ I will have more imagination.</div> <div>▪ More interesting / exciting / fun.</div> <div>▪ Better quality.</div> <div>▪ Makes me feel excited when a live person tells the story.</div> <div>▪ I will understand more.</div> </div>	9
<div> <div>▪ You feel more social.</div> <div>▪ You can ask questions.</div> <div>▪ They tell you what the words mean.</div> <div>▪ It makes it real life if a live person reads to me.</div> <div>▪ I don't want to really stare at the computer, I normally prefer someone reading to me.</div> <div>▪ You can tell them to repeat a sentence without dragging the arrow back.</div> </div>	8
<div> <div>▪ More interesting, can see facial expressions</div> <div>▪ A live person has (more) expressions / more feelings than NSWL.</div> <div>▪ NSWL has not much expression.</div> <div>▪ I like listening to new stories than an old story.</div> </div>	7
<div> <div>▪ It's better and clearer.</div> <div>▪ Easier to understand.</div> <div>▪ Voice is different sometimes you understand better.</div> </div>	5
<div> <div>▪ Sometimes they make natural mistakes.</div> </div>	2
<div> <div>▪ I love reading my own books.</div> </div>	2
<div> <div>▪ My mom reads it.</div> </div>	1
<div> <div>▪ There are words.</div> </div>	1
<div> <div>▪ They are both nice.</div> </div>	1
<div> <div>▪ I like it.</div> </div>	1
<div> <div>▪ I'd already know it.</div> </div>	1

Eight users expressed that they preferred live stories because they would “feel more social” and “[have the opportunity] to ask questions”, as well as having the storyteller “telling you what the words mean”. Seven other respondents indicated that listening to a story told by a live person enabled them to both see and feel more “expressions”. Initially, the school librarians and I anticipated that the majority of students would prefer NSWL because it was assumed that professional actors would be more skillful in engaging the students: they are professionally trained with the skills to deliver a variety of presentation modes, for example, better or more proficient in the use of inflection, tone, voice variations, or even dialects for different characters for his or her interpretations, as well as more effective pacing, pauses, and even silence engage of students’ senses. In addition, NSWL offered other added features, for example, the

background music and sound effects. Students' responses did not explain why live-person stories could be of better quality, and had more expression than the ones read by professional actors under NSWL. Interviews with the school librarians had led to the conclusion that children at this age would still associate storytelling with their own experiences, such as bonding between parent and child socializing with the peers and other comparable experiences provided by a live professional storytellers or adult, and so on. Interviews with the school librarians also revealed that children's first and earlier storytelling experience usually comes directly from their own parents at home, and is usually done before bedtime. It offers a very unique opportunity for both the child and the parent to be very intimate with each other, forming close and mutual emotional bonds. It is also a time for the parent to express his/her utmost attention and irreplaceable tender loving care for the child. In their examinations of *"the pleasure of hearing"*, Doane and Silverman both relied upon the perspective of psychoanalytic theory, where the 'voice' is seen as symbolic of the voice of the mother that surrounds the infant child. They turned to Rosolato's writings, who *"associates that enclosure with plenitude and bliss, and reads it as an emblem of the idyllic unity of mother and child. This primordial listening experience is the prototype for all subsequent auditory pleasure"*.²¹⁹ If listening pleasure in general is unconsciously associated with the mother, listening to a story told aloud is even more associated with childhood, because as Silverman noted, in Western culture, the mother is the archetypal first narrator.

Another disadvantage of NSWL is a student's inability to stop the teacher for discussions or explanations. For example, as recorded on the Post-Questionnaire, two respondents expressed they preferred live stories because "you can ask questions" and "they tell you what the word means". In contrast to the home and school settings, very often the children are always given the opportunity to interact with the storyteller, asking questions, allowing two-way communications, for example, children frequently interrupt a parent or storyteller to ask for explanations of words, or pictures, offer comments. Interviews with the school librarians also revealed that at Bradbury School, live storytelling sessions conducted by professional storytellers or writers are

²¹⁹ SILVERMAN, Kaja. (1988) *The Acoustic Mirror*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, pp. 84 ; DOANE, Mary Ann. (1985) "The Voice in the Cinema: the Articulation of Body and Space." in Elisabeth Weis and John BELTON. (eds.) *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*. (pp. 162-176) N.Y.: Columbia UP.

organized for the students of all grades during the *Book Week*²²⁰ as a major school event. As a result, students would compare this storytelling experience with NSWL. The Bradbury Librarian provided a further explanation on why most students preferred live stories than NSWL, according to his experience:

Bradbury Librarian: *"Children's stories and poems, as well as narration, when it is done by a real human voice, plus being able to see the actual presence of the storyteller – all these help add expressions and reinforce meanings. Sometimes, the professional storytellers would adopt different voices for different characters in the story. Although the NSWL readers/users can also adopt different voices for different characters, a live storyteller can adjust the speed and/or adapt the way the story is told to suit individual audiences of different age groups – which is simply not possible under NSWL."*

Students' comments also pointed to the importance of social interaction in motivating students to read. Children often talk about books with others. In addition, from the students' perspective, storytelling frequently takes place in school or other public venues, and it is usually done before small groups of children of the same age group, under a 'fun' and child-friendly environment. In addition to listening to the story, children are also encouraged to socialize with each other, sharing each other's thoughts and experiences in between the storylines. When children are able to discuss different books with their peers, they become actively involved in literacy learning and become a part of the literacy community with the class.²²¹ These discussions could increase the students' engagement in the reading process, and such talks and discussions open the door to peer recommendations that, for students, may be the most important motivators for voluntary reading.²²² Based on these reasons, it was therefore concluded that despite NSWL's capability of giving a 'virtual-theatre' experience, it could still not replace any of the sentimental attachments, and human interaction brought by live storytelling.

²²⁰ The *Book Week* usually took place in March each year at Bradbury International School. Three storytelling sessions are all scheduled together within the same *Book Week*.

²²¹ FIELDING, L.G, P.T. WILSON, and R.C. ANDERSON. (1986) "A New Focus on Free Reading: the Role of Trade Books in Reading Instruction." in T.E. RAPHEL (eds.) *The Contexts of School-Based Literacy*. (pp. 149-160) New York, N.Y.: Random House ; GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996) "Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; HORNSBY, D. and D. SUKAMA. (1986) *Read on: a Conference Approach to Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann ; WALKER, B.J. (1992) *Supporting Struggling Readers*. Scarborough, Ontario: Pippin Publishing Corporation.

²²² SHORE, R.B. (1968) "Perceived Influence of Peers, Parents, and Teachers on Fifth and Ninth Graders' Preferences of Reading Material." *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 47, 051, No. 86-16, pp. 829 ; WENDELIN, K.H. and R.A. ZINCK. (1983) "How Students Make Book Choices." *Reading Horizons*, Vol. 23, pp. 84-88 ; WORTHY, J. and M. TURNER. (February, 1997) *Motivating Students to Read: Ideas from 6th Grade Students and Their Language Arts Teachers*. Paper presented at the Southwest Regional Conference of the International Reading Association, Forth Worth, TX.

5.5. Gendered Comparison: Analysis of Results from Post-Questionnaire on Comparison Between Genders on Different Reading Practices and Relations to NSWL's Usage

While the previous section examined NSWL's overall usage patterns and user behaviours of both boys and girls, in this section I aim to compare the gendered differences and their relationships to NSWL's usage. As mentioned in Chapter 4, with NSWL being integrated as part of the school-library collection, via the following comparative studies on gendered differences in the choice of reading materials, I examined whether NSWL had the ability to motivate more boys to read for 'pleasure'. The findings were that NSWL did not seem to have any major effect in attracting more boy users. On the contrary, the Post-Questionnaire results indicated that the number of girl-NSWL users was in fact 3% higher than boys. I now share the results of the gendered comparison on NSWL's usage.

5.5.1. Gendered comparison on NSWL's usage patterns and preferences

This section compares the different NSWL usage patterns and user behaviours between boys and girls. Not surprisingly, the results from the Post-Questionnaire survey indicated that out of all 136 NSWL users, 66 (48.5%) were boys and 70 (51.5%) users were girls (see Table 5.19). In other words, the girl-user population was slightly (3%) higher than boys. Interviews with the school librarians revealed that the main reason NSWL had a larger girl-user group was found in NSWL's lack of appealing literature for boys. As concluded in Chapter 4, girls in general tended to read more voluntarily, and used the library more often voluntarily. Girls were also better and more successful readers, and consequently, had advantages over boys. Finally, more girls were reported to 'enjoy' reading fiction. On the contrary, more boys than girls were reported to prefer reading non-fiction, over fiction, and boys also tended to have narrower genre preferences. As mentioned in Section 5.3, much of the NSWL literature was basically adult-level classical fictions, featuring stories and values that do not necessarily apply to modern-day society. Moreover, many of the NSWL titles are restricted mostly to out-of-copyright classical fictions, with storylines that appeal more to girls (for example, family and human relationships with female protagonists rather than more masculine adventure stories) and often requiring a higher level of reading proficiency on the part of the reader. For this reason, girls as a group found it easier to adapt NSWL to their regular reading diet, which eventually

led to a slightly higher NSWL usage amongst girls. Finally, as mentioned in Section 4.4, at elementary level many boys tend to be comic-book readers, and many of them need books with “*exciting colourful pictures*” to draw them to read.²²³ Given the NSWL software did not provide many pictures to illustrate the text or the storyline, it could easily lead to discouragement amongst boys. Based on these factors, it was not surprising to see more girls than boys using NSWL.

(Table 5.19) NSWL Users - Gender Distributions Total NSWL users: 136 (boys + girls)		
1. Do you listen to NSWL in school library?	Post-Questionnaire	
	Boys %	Girls %
Yes	32.1	24.2
Sometimes	67.9	75.8
2. Do you listen to NSWL at home?	Post-Questionnaire	
	Boys %	Girls %
Yes	34.2	35.1
Sometimes	65.8	64.9
Total # of boy users	28 + 38 = 66 boys	
Total # of girl users	33 + 37 = 70 girls	
Ratio (Boys vs. Girls)	48.5	51.5

5.5.2. Popular NSWL titles and relations to gendered preferences

As mentioned in Section 4.2, information on students’ reading interests could be used for targeting students’ personal interests that could motivate them to keep reading. Post-Questionnaire item 33, *Which is your favourite audio-book inside NSWL?* (Table 5.20) sought to identify the most popular NSWL audio-book titles, as well as to identify the gendered differences when students choosing their NSWL titles. A total twenty-three titles were chosen as their favourite NSWL titles by sixty-eight students. As shown in Table 5.20, the figures indicated the variety of reading tastes and patterns amongst the NSWL users. As shown in Table 5.20, more boys chose comedy, and other non-fiction books, or sports. On the contrary, romance, ballet stories, fairy tales, and other stories about family and human relationships with female protagonists were chosen by girls only. On the other hand, adventure, detective and crime stories were more evenly selected. Figures also verified the notion that boys chose certain books that featured men or boys as the main character, and refused to

²²³ OSMONT, Pip. (1987) “Teacher Inquiry in the Classroom: Reading and Gender Set.” *Language Arts*, November, Vol. 64, No. 7, pp. 758-61.

cross the gendered boundaries²²⁴ (see Table 5.20). Such evidence further supported the findings that boys as a group read a narrower range of genres, and more boys than girls enjoyed reading about sports (see Section 4.4).

(Table 5.20)			
33. Which is your favourite audio-book inside NSWL?			
NSWL audio-book titles chosen by students	Boys ²²⁵	Girls ²²⁶	Total
<i>1,000 Years of Laughter</i>	2	1	3
<i>Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There</i>	0	2	2
<i>Ballet Stories</i>	0	2	2
<i>Dog and the shadow</i>	2	1	3
<i>The Emperor's New Clothes</i>	1	1	2
<i>Great Explorers</i>	1	1	2
<i>Heidi</i>	0	2	2
<i>History of World Cup</i>	2	0	2
<i>Jason and Argonauts</i>	2	1	3
<i>Little Women</i>	0	4	4
<i>The Little Red Riding Hood</i>	0	2	2
<i>Martin Luther King</i>	1	0	1
<i>Peter and the Wolf</i>	2	2	4
<i>Peter Pan</i>	2	2	4
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	0	1	1
<i>The Secret Garden</i> ²²⁷	6	6	12
<i>Sherlock Holmes</i>	2	2	4
<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>	0	3	3
<i>The Swan Lake</i>	0	4	4
<i>Thumbelina and Other Fairy Tales</i>	0	3	3
<i>Wind in the Willows</i>	1	2	3
TOTAL:	25	43	68

²²⁴ NSWL audio-books such as *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, *Heidi*, *Little Women*, *The Little Red Riding Hood*, *Ballet Stories*, were not chosen by boys.

²²⁵ **Boys' votes:** NSWL titles voted by total number of boys.

²²⁶ **Girls' votes:** NSWL titles voted by total number of girls.

²²⁷ As shown in (Table 5.20), given *Jason and Argonauts* and *The Secret Garden* were chosen for the two Bradbury NSWL Competition held at different times, *The Secret Garden* received four times more votes than *Jason and Argonauts*. Although boys and girls at this age tend to like different books, it came to the librarians' surprise that *The Secret Garden* was found to be equally popular amongst both boy and girl readers. Interviews with the school librarians in response to my question regarding *The Secret Garden*'s popularity revealed that the story is very moving and the themes are very mature. Another reason behind its popularity amongst both sexes is that the two main characters are a young girl and a young boy. It could be that the plot involving the sickly young boy slowly gaining strength is attractive to boy, despite the book as a whole appearing more of a 'girl story'. According to the Naxos representative and the school librarians, "the relationship between the main characters is the central element of the novel. *The Secret Garden* is one of the few children's books that is about changing yourself, rather than being guided by adults. Mary Lennox is transported from India at the death of her parents to Yorkshire and the home of an emotionally-remote uncle. Left to her own devices, she has to create her own world, thus validating children's own desires for exploration and discovery. The path to her future, however, lies not in the musty past that lies in India nor in her uncle's unhappiness, but in the discovery of nature through Dickon, the exact opposite to her highly-trained Victorian upper-class mentality. Through Dickon she meets the local plants and animals and then uses them to cure her cousin Colin, who is sickly and lives in the past when his mother was alive and his father not so removed. By the end of the book, Mary is a real person, rather than just an ugly child shunted to the side and lied to. Colin achieves his father's dream of health and the secret garden of the title is brought forward to its full potential (like the children). In many ways, it's a classic Victorian tale - but in so many other ways, it is a unique story - although the reader is first presented with the ugly child Mary, the reader soon adopts her as his/her heroine because she's not beaten down by circumstances but uses her own power to create a new future. In the other books by Burnett, such as *Sarah Crew* (also known as *The Little Princess*), the adults are much more vindictive and nasty - Sarah escapes her servant-like situation, but she escapes into her idyllic past, when her father comes home from the wars. For Mary, the past is a dead place and the adults, by and large, leave her alone."

Another factor that was causing such marked differences in the usage was the reading-ability level of the literature inside NSWL. It was noticeable that not only were reading tastes eclectic, but boys and girls of the same age were reading books with very marked differences in the level of sophistication (for example, in terms of language, plot and subject matter) (see Table 5.20). Considering a large proportion of the NSWL titles are out-of-copy-right classical fictions, often requiring a higher level of reading proficiency on the part of the reader. Many fictional works, despite of their lack of overt informational content, may indeed require a higher level of verbal ability from the reader than does the straightforward presentation of facts typical of juvenile non-fiction.²²⁸ For this reason, girls as a group found it easier to adapt NSWL to their regular reading diet which eventually led to a slightly higher NSWL usage amongst girls (see Section 4.5).

5.6. NSWL Usage and Gendered Differences: Analysis of Results from Student Interviews

As outlined in Chapter 4, the two students focus group interviews had enabled me to develop a deeper understanding of students' perceptions of NSWL, as well as to reflect on the quantitative data collected from the student questionnaire surveys. For example, student participants were asked to describe their experiences in using NSWL, and the factors which helped them decide what to read. I now share results from the student interviews on NSWL-user experiences.

5.6.1. NSWL for bedtime stories

One of the focus group questions sought to explore the reasons why a majority of students chose to access NSWL at home after school, rather than at the school library. A majority of the NSWL users indicated in the Post-Questionnaire survey that they liked using NSWL at home, particularly during bedtime. Their comments were consistent with the Post-Questionnaire survey results, and NSWL's usage frequencies, that is a high percentage of the streaming activities occurred late in the evening. According to students' comments:

²²⁸ CHILDRESS, Glenda T. (Fall, 1985) "Gender Gap in the Library: Difference Choices for Girls and Boys." *Top of the News*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 72.

Colin: *“I prefer to listen to it at nighttime before I go to bed, because it helps you go to sleep.”*

Eric: *“I also prefer to listen to it at home, only after school, not before I sleep. Because before I go to bed, I get too tired.”*

Grace: *“Usually at night. I usually listen to Naxos, then I do something else, then I go to sleep.”*

Yuya: *“Yes, I also prefer at nighttime before I sleep, because I usually get sleepy, and it makes you sleepier.”*

One of the reasons that students preferred using NSWL at home was that they felt they would have more time with the resource, for example:

Eric: *“I like to do it at home too, because I don’t have enough time to listen to the whole book at school. At home, I could listen to NSWL as long as I want.”*

Yuya agreed with Eric and said that he also preferred to listen to NSWL at home as he would feel more relaxed and have more time with his own computer.

Students also indicated that using NSWL at home made them feel more “relaxed”. Furthermore, they could also “enjoy” their ‘reading’ experience better, since they could have longer time with their own computers at home. Students’ comments above further supported the notion that a majority of students preferred using NSWL at home after school (see Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2). Moreover, the findings also revealed that NSWL was a great idea for children as a bedtime story. According to the school librarians, although NSWL cannot make substitute for a parent reading a story to the child (see Section 5.4.13), the right selection of audio-books could provide a calming atmosphere in a way that the parent might not be able to do at times. Students’ comments revealed that audio-books could provide a great atmosphere to ‘lull’ the children to fall asleep at night if the narration and story offer a soothing and calming atmosphere. More importantly, under such a setting, children gradually treat the process of reading to NSWL as a form of before-bed entertainment, rather than as an academic task to be mastered. In other words, students would see listening to NSWL more of a ‘pleasure’ than a ‘duty’. Students’ comments also conveyed the notion that audio-books could serve as convenient and instant time-savers for busy

parents²²⁹, satisfying their children's instant gratification, rather than having to wait for parents to attend to their needs. For instance, in the focus group interviews, students were asked if their parents would still read to them at home, and their responses were:

Colin: *"No they don't. They are too busy. But I turn to Naxos for storytelling."*

Cherie: *"Yes, my mother still reads to me at home. But when she gets too busy, I can listen to Naxos by myself, and I don't have to rely on my mother. Usually, my mother offers to read to me."*

Interviews with the school librarians and results from the Parent Questionnaire survey (see Appendix 6) also revealed that NSWL could create entertaining and yet educational options for parents who do not prefer their children to watch television all the time.

5.6.2. Reading while listening versus just reading

To further analyze to what extent NSWL's 'read-while-listen' functionality could actually assist the readers decode the text, which some of the less-motivated readers found particularly useful, we need to return to the concept of 'multimodality' (see Section 2.5). The major advantages of audio-books for reluctant readers are that they allow them to use both modalities of reading and listening to support their development of word knowledge, thereby enabling them to hear the correct pronunciation of words as well as supporting their acquisitions of the English language. Additionally, reading while listening could reduce the difficulties associated with reading by increasing the recognition of words, supporting vocabulary development, and enhancing comprehension.²³⁰ For example, both Eric and Yuya had perceived reading as labourious and boring, although they had already out-grown being read to, they both found audio-reading with NSWL to be 'enjoyable'. Although both students only had a brief 'try' with NSWL before taking part in the interview, they both indicated positive user experiences with NSWL and said:

²²⁹ KOZLOFF, Sarah. (1995) "Audio Books in a Visual Culture." *Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 83-109.

²³⁰ DUTRO, Elizabeth. (Dec. 2001/Jan. 2002) "'But That's a Girls' Book!'" Exploring Gender Boundaries in Children's Reading Practices." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 163.

Eric: *"I like it very much. It is not boring. It is easy to read and I can follow it easily. The words are very clear ... I don't have to read the words, I can just listen."*²³¹

Yuya: *"I also like it very much, because it is not boring and I don't have to read it."*

In fact, there was a broad agreement amongst the Bradbury users as Cherie pointed out at the interview that she also found NSWL relatively easy to use and was not "boring" to listen to.

Furthermore, remarks made by Cherie, Eric and Yuya at the interview were also echoed by some of the comments collected from the Post-Questionnaire survey. Post-Questionnaire item number 22-B asked why students thought that NSWL was better than a regular paper-book, and results indicated that NSWL could reduce the difficulties and pressure associated with reading, for example:

"It is fun to read to yourself as if somebody reading to you."

"You don't need to read it."

"It helps you with the words you don't know how to pronounce."

"It is OK and it is easy to follow."

"The online text tells what to do so it's easier."

The findings suggest that NSWL could be used as a flexible scaffolding tool, by shifting the burden of decoding from one of recall to that of word recognition – thereby stretching students' skills to a point within their grasp, with the aim of bridging independent silent reading.

5.6.3. 'Dramatization' and readers' imaginations

Audio-books offer 'dramatized' productions specifically replicating radio aesthetics. Similar to radio drama, audio-books provide examples of aural 'dramatizations' with the use of sound effects, the enjoyment of multiple performers and music, for example,

²³¹ It should also be noted that despite Eric and Yuya were both not keen readers of traditional paper-books, during their trial use on NSWL (before the focus group interview), despite it was short, NSWL was able to sustain both of the full attention. They also they did not show any signs of being distracted, or complained about being bored afterwards.

horses galloping, and dramatic musical scoring.²³² Some focus group interview participants described their user experience to be “not boring”, as NSWL’s background music and sound effects could make them feel more involved in the story by creating a sense of drama. Furthermore, student participants also mentioned at the interviews that the background music and the additional sound effects actually helped them imagine. As Philips described, *“sound is the element that the audio-book adds to the experience of reading a printed page. The audio-book introduces music and voices, new dimensions that enhance a text”*²³³ - in other words, serving a ‘virtual theatre’ that could stimulate these young listeners’ imaginations. For example, Eric, Yuya, and Cherie all pointed out that the ways the stories were presented made them “more real” and “help them imagine”, while Yuko used words like “it is like real life”, to describe her listening experience. For instance, when students were asked to describe their user experience with NSWL, their responses were:

Eric: *“Yes, there are also the sounds and the music. They help you think that the character is really doing it, the sounds make it more real. They help you imagine the characters and the stories. I don’t have to read the words, I can just listen.”*

Yuya: *“The music in the background also relaxes you. It calms you down and helps you imagine.”*

Yuya: *“Yes, I could hear the dog barking when I listened to The Dog and the Shadow.”*

Cherie: *“I prefer Naxos, it has got different expressions. It helps me imagine.”*

Yuko: *“It is more interesting, it is like real life. I like the music too.”*

Eric: *“She is quite good (referring to the reader), sometimes she does different voices too, sometimes very high, sometimes very low....also different accents too...very interesting.”*

Eric and Yuya both listened to the same NSWL story, and Yuya agreed with Eric that the voice intonation and inflection of the NSWL story performer/reader had made the story more “interesting” to listen to.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ PHILIPS, Deborah. (2007) “Talking Books: the Encounter of Literature and Technology in the Audio Book” *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 302.

5.6.4. Reading expressions and speeds: effects on reading comprehension

Although a number of students agreed that NSWL's read-while-listen functionality could actually help them decode the text being read, not every NSWL user saw these added features as advantages, as some of them found NSWL's reading speed to be a detriment. Remarks from several students, together with the comments collected from the Post-Questionnaire indicated that not being able to control the NSWL's reading speed was a drawback (see Table 5.15), for example, *"sometimes they read too fast and I cannot keep track of what they are saying and what part they are in the book."* Grace also pointed out at the interview that:

Grace: *"I prefer paper-books, because I can read it at my own speed. I can stop at any chapter. With Naxos, if I get lost, I have to listen to the whole section again. The screen (computer) is too bright, and I always have to scroll down to read the text onscreen."*

Furthermore, given NSWL's audio-books are read by professional actors, some students would occasionally find certain regional accents and expressions to be confusing or not 'enjoyable'. After all, listening and reading are highly personal and subjective experiences, and whether the student 'enjoys' the ways the stories being presented or read depends entirely on the individual listener's taste and personal experience, as well as his/her ability to understand certain ways of speaking. For example, Grace and Cherie are both very skilled readers, they pointed out that they disliked the ways certain readers present the stories inside NSWL:

Grace: *"Some readers, I don't like. For example, the person doing the voice for Lorrie in Little Women, every time I hear that voice, I want to skip ahead."*

Cherie: *"I think sometimes the reader is a bit funny and difficult to understand, I mean the way they pronounce certain words."*

5.6.5. Importance of a child-friendly interface and relevant children literature

With reference to NSWL's setup, another major factor preventing an active use of the resource amongst students could be the lack of a child-friendly user interface. For example, Grace pointed out at the student interview that:

Grace: *"In NSWL, the easy and difficult books are all mixed together. Some books have thirty-something chapters and some have only two chapters, but*

they are all mixed together. I think they should list out how many book chapters the books have. I think books with similar length and difficult levels should be grouped together."

Based on the comments from the two school librarians and other classroom teachers, under NSWL's current setting, the icons for the children and junior sections are hardly noticeable to these younger users. Most children (especially boys) lack the patience and determination to browse through a long list of adult-level literature in order to hope that they might find something interesting to read. For example, Grace's remark on the layout of the NSWL user interface was echoed by other comments recorded on the Parent Questionnaire and Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire:

Parent A: *"My child would like to read more short stories."*

Parent B: *"My child finds the overall design/interface of the NSWL software too complicated."*

Bradbury School Library staff: *"Again relating to the customization of the NSWL – we would prefer to have a more child-friendly interface. The site is otherwise fairly easy to use."*

According to the Kingston Librarian, there were also other technical issues that eventually became a concern for some of the teachers and the library staff at Kingston School concerning the use of NSWL. According to her explanation:

Kingston Librarian: *"For close to two months, the students kept telling me they had no Internet access to NSWL at all, and it was most frustrating. Some students complained that the headphones bothered their ears, and did not feel comfortable wearing them. Moreover, several students keep losing their login names and passwords that we sent to them and their parents at the beginning of the school term. As a librarian, my duty also included troubleshooting the software problems brought by NSWL. If I could not resolve the difficulties, I had to make records of them and send them to Naxos Digital Service, Ltd. Some parents also indicated to me that their children have difficulties navigating the NSWL interface at home, and their kids were simply discouraged by it – as young children at this age simply lacked the patience and persistence to browse through a long list of adult-level classic literature in order to find something that might interest them to read."*

5.6.6. Convenience of access via internet connectivity

As Coleman suggested, *"the [electronic] books are available twenty-four hours a day from home ... students are more likely to consult a book if they can do it from a computer ... rather than by trudging over to the library."*²³⁴ The NSWL Monthly Usage Report indicated that there were students using NSWL during the Christmas holiday. In order to verify this, I asked the students *"Why do you think they were listening to NSWL instead of playing [at Christmas]? Were you the one using NSWL at Christmas?"*

Yuko: *"I listened to NSWL because I got bored and wanted to find something to do after Christmas dinner."*

This access is particularly important for students when all libraries have limited service hours. Yuko's comment indicates that convenience was one of NSWL's main appeals as an alternative source of reading materials. Even when all schools, public libraries and bookstores were closed, she was still able to obtain instant access to a range of books to choose from via NSWL conveniently. According to Coleman, the major advantage of electronic-books is that they provide *"a better delivery mechanism"* for text.²³⁵ He also said, *"the books are available twenty-four hours a day from the office or home. They are never lost or damaged. Students are more likely to consult a book if they can do it from a computer ... rather than by trudging over to the library."*²³⁶ As mentioned in Section 4.4, there is a strong link between reading achievement and book access. Other studies also suggested that opportunities for book access and avenues for home use are significant factors in reading motivation.²³⁷ Yuko's comment further supported the idea that NSWL could enhance the availability of reading materials which could significantly influence students' attitudes, motivation, and interests in reading.²³⁸ The Bradbury Librarian also commented on NSWL's advantages of wireless Internet connectivity, according to his experience:

²³⁴ COLEMAN, G. (2004) "E-books and Academics: an Ongoing Experiment." *Feliciter*, Vol.50, No. 4, pp. 124.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ ELLEY, W.B. (1992) *How in the World Do Students Read?* Hamburg, Germany: International Association for the Evaluation Achievement.

²³⁸ HARRIS, A.J. and E.R. SIPAY. (1990) *How to Increase reading Ability: a Guide to Developmental and Remedial Methods*. (9th ed.) White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.

Bradbury Librarian: *"One of the main advantages of having the NSWL was that it greatly enhanced students' access to books, and had at least attracted students like Colin, who had never been a keen library user to make use of the library resources without the trouble of physically coming to the school library. For the NSWL Competition, I could have chosen a very popular paper-book for this competition, for example, Harry Potter. I am sure the circulation would have gone up rapidly. But I would need to buy at least one hundred copies, if I wanted to engage the entire 5th-grade and 6th-grade in this Competition. And I am sure there will also be a long waiting list for the same copies, since the other 2nd-, 3rd- and 4th-grade students would also want to read them. But after the Competition, all these books (of the same title) would simply end up occupying all the shelf-space. But with NSWL, students of different physical locations could share the same title. Besides, I would not need to ask the students to make the extra effort to come to the school library to borrow the book in between lessons. They would access the book via the Internet and read it whenever they like at home in the most convenient manner. Other English teachers could also make good use of this convenient online resource, if they want to assign specific books for the students to read as part of their homework. In summary, NSWL did enable the students to experiment with books and allow keen readers to acquire substantial amounts of reading without overdue expenses and inconvenience."*

5.6.7. NSWL versus paper-books: reading levels and comprehension

In the final section of the analysis of the student focus group data, I attempted to find out whether students preferred NSWL over traditional paper-books by asking the students to compare one against the other. The concept of such comparison derived from having examined NSWL's nature and unique added features, such online audio-book resource could transform the former/traditional linear-print-text reading experience into the parallel processing of multimodal text-image and audio-learning experience, which might render itself more attractive to children, when compared to a traditional paper-book. To verify this notion, I asked the students, *"Given you have a paper-book and a Naxos audio-book of the same title, what would you prefer?"*, and their responses were:

Colin: *"I prefer Naxos, because you can listen, and it helps you imagine the stories and easier to read. I can follow it easily."*

Eric and Yuya: *"I prefer Naxos."*

Cheric: *"I prefer Naxos, it has got different expressions. It helps me imagine. And you don't have to read it, you just listen – it has got music and stuff and the sound effects. Also Naxos has more details...(referring to the complete version and not the abridged version)."*

Yuko: *“I like both.”*

Grace: *“Definitely a paper-book. But if I have nothing to do, I would listen to Naxos as well.”*

With the exception of Grace²³⁹, responses from students indicated that they had positive user experiences and preferred NSWL as it provided an opportunity to hear and read the text concurrently or just listening to it, in other words, making the actual ‘reading’ easier, especially for the less-motivated readers.

5.6.8. Students’ suggestions for improvements on NSWL

Having discussed why and how students used NSWL, student participants were asked to give suggestions on how to improve NSWL. Students’ suggestions ranged from the addition of specific books, to a more child-friendly user interface. Cherie felt that it was important to introduce more books by contemporary writers in order to foster a greater interest amongst the students, for example:

Cherie: *“I think they should have more famous books like Harry Potter. The books from Naxos are usually very old.”*

The lack of contemporary children’s literature was already pointed out in Sections 5.3 and 5.5.2. In fact, Cherie’s suggestion for more books by contemporary authors was once again echoed by other students’ comments recorded on the Post-Questionnaire survey. When students were asked to give their favourite NSWL titles, a number of students gave titles of other contemporary literature that were outside NSWL’s current coverage (see Table 5.21).

(Table 5.21) Non-NSWL Titles Requested by Users	
Non-NSWL Titles	# of requesters
Mr. Midnight	1
Redwall	3
Sons of Destiny	1
The Long Patrol	1
Unfortunate Events	1

²³⁹ Grace admitted at the interview that she listened to NSWL daily, and her comments and regular usage seemed to indicate that she viewed the use of audio-books primarily as an alternative opportunity to listen to the books.

Other recommendations included suggestions on adding more pictures to make NSWL more attractive to children, for example:

Grace: *"Yes, they also don't have pictures, just the cover of the book. Maybe they should add more pictures."*

Yuko: *"Yes, I also think they should add more pictures to NSWL."*

Suggestions from Grace and Yuko seemed to relate back to other students' comments recorded on the questionnaire survey, saying that "[NSWL] has no photos and is boring." Such findings conveyed the notion that children do not read the language and then the pictures and then listen to the sounds; rather, they take them in a *gestalt*, a whole, all at once.²⁴⁰ Thus, we educators should also recognize the fact that even for 5th- and 6th-grade students, visual images still play an important role in attracting their attention, as well as helping them understand the text that they are reading.

5.6.9. "Boys' books" versus "girls' books"

To verify with students whether they also thought that the literature inside NSWL catered mostly for girls, I concluded the interview by asking *"Do you think Naxos has too many books for boys or too many books for girls?"*

Grace: *"No, I think it is quite even."*

Both Ashley and Yuko also thought that the ratio between "boys'" and "girls' books" inside NSWL was quite uneven.

Grace: (after a short pause) *"Based on the list of books I went through inside Naxos, I think there are more books for girls inside NSWL."*

Grace's comment relates once again back to the issue that despite of the wealth classical children's literature available inside NSWL, it is relatively difficult to find materials that cater for boy readers. Making interesting materials (such as non-fiction works by contemporary authors or books that feature male protagonists) available

²⁴⁰ DUNCUM, Paul. (2004) "Visual Culture Isn't Just Visual: Multiliteracy, Multimodality and Meaning." *Studies in Art Education*, Spring, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 259.

inside NSWL might encourage otherwise reluctant boy readers to read (see Section 5.5.2).

Finally, the school librarians from both schools were asked whether they had witnessed any noticeable changes in the reading practices amongst students, as a result of incorporating NSWL into the library-skill curriculum, their responses were as follows:

Bradbury and Kingston Librarian: *“Based on our observations, the provision of online audio resources such as NSWL can have a positive impact on students’ attitude towards the materials, and the reading process. However, I did not observe any direct corresponding generation of interest in the traditional reading materials. This could be explained with reference to the different learning styles of individual students, especially when they come from very different cultural backgrounds. Those students who are auditory learners are indeed well-served by NSWL. Also I think it is very important to emphasize the importance of promotion, not just to the students, but to the parents as well as other classroom teachers. Without active encouragement, and support from both teachers and parents, the NSWL is likely to go unused. NSWL on the other hand contributed greatly to the setup of the different reading incentive programmes such as the NSWL Competition, despite many of its audio-book titles belong to the ‘classics’ category, and might not be of popular taste.”*

5.7. Bringing Data Together: Summary of Results on NSWL

Having identified various advantages and disadvantages concerning NSWL’s functionalities and their impacts on students’ user experiences, in this section, I will bring all the data together to build an overall picture of NSWL’s use by students and assess whether it might be more able to enhance reading and literacy. In the beginning of this chapter, I used the usage statistics to determine NSWL’s overall usage frequencies and patterns at the two school sites. The results indicated that NSWL’s after-school streaming activities corresponded directly to the notion that the school library is seen as a place for active learning rather than for personal pursuits, resulting in a higher number of users accessing NSWL directly from home. The higher home-user population together with high usage after school, further supported the notion that NSWL possesses the potential to motivate voluntary reading via improving access to reading materials.

The Post-Questionnaire survey findings also suggested that NSWL had the capability to improve reading competence amongst children. A majority of users were positive about using NSWL. The Post-Questionnaire survey results also revealed that using NSWL provided important support for acquiring English, including reducing many difficulties associated with reading. As a result, using NSWL also had the potential to improve the students' reading ability, thereby changing attitudes of unmotivated readers. Users in general agreed that NSWL's added features (such as background music and sound effects) could help them understand the text, in addition to enhancing a sense of drama. Despite these advantages, the majority of users still preferred stories to be told by a live person, due to various social and sentimental reasons and not all of the children 'enjoyed' using NSWL. A small number of users found NSWL "boring" and "not easy to use", due mainly to the lack of illustrations and contemporary literature suitable for elementary-level students - all these factors were central to why a small percentage of students, particularly boys, did not find NSWL appealing.

In the student interviews, users' perspectives on using NSWL provided a window into further understanding of reading, gendered differences, and what it meant to be a NSWL user. Most of the students interviewed 'enjoyed' using NSWL, but their reasons for this 'enjoyment' varied. However, the benefits cited by the students were similar across the results from the questionnaire survey and the student interviews. Throughout the student interviews, it became evident that they used NSWL for 'pleasure', but that NSWL subconsciously supported their vocabulary development. Users indicated that NSWL helped both reduce the difficulties associated with reading and promoted the acquisition of new words. However, separate research on practices would need to be undertaken in order to establish perception from fact. Many students felt that using NSWL was easier in comparison to a paper-book because it provided an opportunity to hear and read concurrently, thereby transforming the former linear-print-text reading experience into the parallel processing of multimodal text-image and audio-learning experience. NSWL also gave students convenient access to reading materials in addition to the regular paper-book collection from the school library. Most users preferred using NSWL at home before bedtime, rather than at school, which was also consistent with the Post-Questionnaire survey results and the NSWL usage reports. Furthermore, most of the keen NSWL users happened to be

avid readers, and they also tended to have parents who already fostered favourable reading environments by reading to their children or conversing with them about books they read.

The findings from the student focus group interviews highlighted various potentials of NSWL as an educational tool; and at the same time, enabled us to understand why NSWL had failed to motivate students’ reading motivation in general, and also justified why a majority of the NSWL users were girls. Evidence from the study supports the statement by Balajthy that computer-based resources for teaching reading do not provide a ‘magical motivational cure’.²⁴¹ Children who ‘enjoyed’ using computers or were self-motivated prior to the study made effective use of the software. The added features did not necessarily inspire those who were lacking in motivation. Rather, they perceived the whole activity of listening to NSWL to be an academic task, albeit one requiring less effort.

All findings addressed in Chapter 5 are summarized as follows:

(Table 5.22) Chapter 5: Summary of Findings			
Sections	Research Questions	Findings	Data Sources
5.2.1.	What were NSWL’s overall usage frequencies and patterns?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bradbury - School – average 289 clips per month (57.8% of such streaming occurred after school). 2. Kingston School – average 183 per month (60.7% of such streaming occurred after school). 	NSWL monthly usage statistics from NSWL software programme
5.2.2.	What were teachers’ and parents’ views on NSWL?	<p>Parents and teachers agreed that NSWL had the potential to complement classroom practice and literacy instructions, e.g.:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NSWL could provide modeled intonation and nuance, fluency, accuracy and conventions of punctuations. 2. NSWL could give reluctant readers a taste of silent reading - engaging 	<p>Parent/Teacher Questionnaire surveys</p> <p>Interviews with School Librarians</p>

²⁴¹ BALAJTHY, E. (1989) *Computer and Reading: Lessons from the Past and the Technologies of the Future*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

		<p>the reader in the text so that reading is stimulated.</p> <p>3. NSWL was also useful in giving hints to encourage independent word identification.</p>	
5.3.	What were librarians' and teachers' comments on NSWL's content coverage?	<p>High percentage of NSWL literature was out-of-copyright literary classics, lacking pictures; most importantly, many titles were too advanced for elementary-level students.</p> <p>Only 28% of entire NSWL collection catered especially for the elementary-school level.</p>	Interviews with School Librarians
5.4.1.	What was NSWL's overall user population?	<p>Out of all 260 Post-Questionnaire respondents, 136 (52%) indicated that they used NSWL.</p> <p>More students preferred using NSWL at home (out of 136 NSWL users, 45% were school-library users; remaining 55% were home users).</p>	Student Post-Questionnaire survey
5.4.2.	Did a majority of students preferred using NSWL at home or at school library?	43.4% of students preferred using NSWL at home; 34.5% preferred at school library; remaining 22.1% said at both places.	Same as above
5.4.3.	Did a majority of users prefer choosing their own titles to read from NSWL?	Choices for reading materials are important in shaping reading for 'pleasure'. Majority of users preferred choosing their own NSWL titles, i.e., 65.4% said "Yes"; 16.7% said "Sometimes" to prefer choosing their own NSWL titles, as opposed to 17.7% said "No".	Same as above
5.4.4.	Did a majority of users still have parents reading stories to them at home?	Majority of students already outgrown the idea of having adults reading stories to them. Only less than 10% of users still depended on parents reading stories to them, i.e., 9.2% said "Yes"; 27.5% said "Sometimes"; while a majority (63.3%) said "No".	Same as above
5.4.6 – 5.4.7.	Did a majority of users enjoy using NSWL and did they think NSWL was easy to use?	<p>Majority of users 'enjoyed' using NSWL, i.e., 33.3% said "Yes", to enjoy using NSWL, while 37.2% said "Sometimes"; only remaining 29.5% said "No".</p> <p>Majority of users found NSWL easy</p>	Same as above

		<p>to use, i.e., 37.2% found NSWL, “Easy and interesting”; 17.8% said “Easy but boring”; only 0.8% said NSWL was “Too difficult”.</p> <p>Users ‘enjoyed’ using NSWL because it reduced many reading difficulties and helped them learn new words.</p>	
5.4.8.	Why a small number of users found NSWL “boring”?	35 respondents indicated negative user experiences, some described NSWL as “boring”, due to lack of contemporary literature inside NSWL. Furthermore, only 28% of NSWL’s contents catered for elementary-level students. Students therefore found difficulties relating to the stories. Large proportion of NSWL literature was Euro-American centric.	Same as above
5.4.9.	Why were illustrations important for children literature inside NSWL?	Some students found NSWL “boring” because “it has no photos.” Because students were used to the digital environment, in which illustrations are a popular feature in children’s books today. For many elementary-level, students, illustrations are still important in attracting their attention, and help them understand the text/storyline.	Same as above
5.4.10 – 5.4.11.	Did majority of users prefer NSWL or regular paper-books given the title were the same? And Why?	<p>Reasons students preferred NSWL included: reduced difficulties associated with reading and supported acquisition of English language, e.g., auditory-visual integration has potential to combine benefits of listening to a text in helping to decipher written language.</p> <p>Reasons students preferred paper-books over NSWL: not able to control reading speed and reading on computer screen caused discomforts.</p>	Same as above
5.4.12.	Did NSWL’s background sound and sound effects help users understand the text being read?	<p>50% of respondents said “Sometimes”; 26.6% said “Yes”; only the remaining 23.4% said “No”.</p> <p>Majority of users agreed that NSWL’s music and sound effects helped understand and enjoy the texts, as it provided examples of aural ‘dramatizations’ – all helped illustrate storylines, and contribute to mood settings, thereby making it</p>	Same as above

		a 'whole' and 'enjoyable' 'reading' experience.	
5.4.13.	Did users prefer stories by live storyteller over NSWL?	<p>A majority of users 50.8% said "Yes" they did; 24.2% said "Sometimes". Only the remaining 25% said "No".</p> <p>More students preferred live stories due to human interactions, and other social and sentimental reasons – all could not be replicated by NSWL.</p>	Same as above
5.5.	Gendered Comparison – what were the different gendered usage patterns and reading preferences based on titles available inside NSWL?	<p>Out of all 136 NSWL users, 48.5% were boys; 51.5% were girls.</p> <p>NSWL had a larger girl-user group, due to higher percentage of literature was classical fictions (girls tend to read more fiction), and fewer titles inside NSWL 'pandered' to boys' interests.</p>	Same as above
5.6.1.	Why did many users prefer using NSWL at bedtime?	<p>NSWL provide an atmosphere to 'lull' children to sleep if stories offer a soothing/calming atmosphere.</p> <p>Children treated NSWL as a form of before-bed entertainment, rather than a task.</p> <p>NSWL also served as convenient and instant time-savers for busy parents who have not time to read to children.</p>	Student focus group interviews
5.6.2 – 5.6.7.	What were students' overall NSWL experiences?	<p>Student interview results were consistent with Post-Questionnaire-survey findings, i.e., students used NSWL for 'pleasure', and subconsciously supported their literacy development. Students indicated that using NSWL included: reducing difficulties associated with reading, as many they felt that NSWL was easier in comparison to paper-books, as it provided opportunity to hear and read concurrently – transforming the former linear-print-text-reading experience into multimodal text-image, audio-learning experience.</p> <p>Via Internet, NSWL provided convenient access to books in addition to the school library's printed collection.</p>	Same as above
5.6.8.	What were students' suggestions for improvement on NSWL?	Adding more illustrations to illustrate the stories in order to	Same as above

		attract students who are visual learners, particularly boys. Adding more elementary-level children books by contemporary authors to complement the literacy classics already available.	
--	--	--	--

5.8. Conclusion to Chapter 5

In this chapter, I have analyzed the quantitative data from the student Post-Questionnaire and qualitative data from the student interviews to compare the distinctive reading practices between boys and girls and how it related to the usage patterns of NSWL. I have also discussed NSWL’s disadvantages as well as highlighting its various potentials in being a convenient and yet effective educational tool for making reading easier for students. In the next chapter, I will provide a review of the research study as a whole, followed by further discussion of the overall findings in relation to the conceptual framework of this study, as well as the implications of the overall findings. Most importantly, I will answer all the research questions stated in the beginning of this research study.

CHAPTER 6

OVERALL RESEARCH FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' READING PRACTICES UNDER THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

6.1. Introduction

This study has explored children's use of school libraries and whether or not the introduction of a literacy innovation stimulated usage and literacy practices. We examined whether using the chosen audio resource (Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL)) influenced students' reading motivation at two urban elementary schools in Hong Kong. This study looked at the experiences of using NSWL within the school-library environment from the perspectives of students, school librarians, classroom teachers, and parents. Each voice contributed to a better understanding of the benefits and the challenges of using NSWL. Although this study focused only on two international schools in Hong Kong, the findings suggested important information for other elementary schools in Hong Kong more generally.

To begin this study, I conducted a review of the research literature on the interrelationships between school libraries, ICT, multimodality and their potential impacts on students' reading practices, to justify the need for this study. As illustrated in Chapter 3, 4 and 5, this study made use of a combination of research methods (both quantitative and qualitative): a series of questionnaire surveys and focus group interviews with a selective number of students from the two school sites. The aim of this mixed-method approach was to examine from multiple perspectives, whether the two practices - access to libraries as opening up new opportunities to read, and the use of ICTs in reading in the form of audio-books - might also create a unique space and opportunity to stimulate and enrich students' reading experience.

In this chapter, I will bring together all the key arguments and research findings, and illustrate a series of issues concerning this study's contributions, methodological challenges, technical constraints, as well as other important matters that I have learnt through my close collaboration with the two school librarians. This chapter concludes with discussions on the strengths and limitations of using NSWL as a tool for enhancing students' reading motivation.

6.2. Research Questions and Answers

I now attempt to answer the original questions which directed the analysis for this research, and they are as follows (see Section 1.2):

- *What was the nature and direction of changes in the number of students who would use the school library for pleasure-based reading or other literacy-related activities?*
- *Were there any changes in the amount of voluntary reading students undertook after being exposed to this chosen online audio resource five months later?*

The overall student questionnaire findings and analysis of the school library interviews provided multi-dimensional perspectives of the overall changes found in the nature and usage of the school library. The use of NSWL as a complementary reading programme was not found to be associated with any significant difference in the students' reading motivation during the course of this study. The evidence, in fact, suggested that the amount of voluntary reading carried out by students had actually decreased, although this was believed to be attributable to other formal commitments imposed upon the students by the curricula which meant they had less time and felt disinclined to engage in more 'pleasurable' reading pursuits. Because of the changes in the school-library climate, students began to see the school library as supporting their formal information and curricular needs, rather than supporting their leisure activities or personal pursuits. It might be that independent reading was a casualty of the gradually intensified schooling (see Section 4.2.1). On the other hand, the results indicated that the mandatory library-skill lessons were indeed useful in ensuring that students acquire the necessary library skills to become confident and independent information seekers under the school-library environment (see Section 4.2.2). Unfortunately, improved library skills did not guarantee an enhancement of reading motivation amongst the students. In other words, library skills and reading motivation did not necessarily go hand-in-hand, even though these skills are a prerequisite for effective retrieval of desired reading materials in the library.

- *What were students' views of online audio-books and on their evolving sense of reading?*

- *Where there any gendered differences in reading practices and reading attitudes in association with the online audio-book resource?*

Many other factors that emerged in the course of this study enabled me to answer the third and fourth research questions. Findings suggested that electronic audio-books have the potential to be an effective, low-cost enhancement for motivating the students, as multi-media technology can enhance students' reading experience with sound, as well as other added features in addition to the online text. For example, results revealed that NSWL's multimodality viewing and audio capabilities had the potential to make reading an 'enjoyable' experience for some of the student users, including reducing many difficulties associated with reading. For instance, it reduced the burden of reading by helping students decode the text, as well as enabling students to make meaning effectively through the interaction of different communicative modes. As Cope and Kalantzis put it, "*the multimodal relations between different meaning-making processes that are now so critical in media texts and the texts of electronic multi-media.*"²⁴² As a result, NSWL's added features could be particularly effective for enhancing the motivation of reluctant readers, as its added features enable the audio readers to be actively engaged in constructing schema from the story so that they have a better chance of reading for meaning.²⁴³ Reading while listening draws on the benefits of using both modalities to enhance text comprehension.²⁴⁴ Additionally, reading while listening to audio-books provides opportunities for students to read independently with minimal teacher supervision, and the benefits of reading independently are well documented in the research literature.²⁴⁵ Audio-books also allow students to hear the correct pronunciation of words and thereby support their acquisition of the English language. These positive feelings might directly influence students' reading development, and findings from this study suggested that a majority of students found reading while listening to NSWL 'enjoyable', which

²⁴² COPE, B. and K. KALANTZIS. (eds.) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. Melbourne: Macmillan, pp. 24.

²⁴³ ANDERSON, R.C. (1977) "The Notion of Schema and the Educational Enterprise." in R.C. ANDERSON. [et. al.] (eds.) *Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate, pp. 27 ; AUSUBEL, D.P. (1967) "Cognitive Theory of School Learning." in L. SIEGEL. (ed.) *Instruction*. (pp. 99-107) San Francisco, Calif.: Chandler.

²⁴⁴ STANOVICH, K.E. (1986) "Matthew Effects in Reading: Some Consequences of Individual Differences in the Acquisition of Literacy." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 360-406.

²⁴⁵ ALLINGTON, R.L. (2001) *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs*. New York, N.Y.: Addison Wesley Longman ; ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT, and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; TAYLOR, B.M., B.J. FRYE, and G.M. MARUYAMA. (1990) "Time Spent Reading and Reading Growth." *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 27, pp. 351-362.

could in turn increase their motivation to read. Opportunity and access also play an important role in motivating students to read voluntarily.²⁴⁶ Evidence from this study further supported the notion that online audio-books have several advantages over paper-books in terms of enhancing access to reading materials. For example, combining both education and entertainment, NSWL makes use of the power of the Internet to enable reading, anytime, anywhere. Meanwhile, it offers these young readers an object that is as similar as possible to the paper-books, by replacing their essential physical features, such as size and quality, and at the same time, overcoming many limitations of the traditional paper-books, for example, by adding a series of added-value features, which are only made possible through the nature of the electronic environment.

Although NSWL could provide a variety of critical technological advantages over paper-books (for example, convenience and ease of access, audio effects and other added online features), the final findings indicated that the amount of voluntary reading carried out by students had actually decreased after being exposed to NSWL five months later. Several factors were identified for NSWL's failure in motivating more students to read. Firstly, there was a great lack of contemporary literature appropriate to students' age, reading abilities and cultural interests. Secondly, the lack of a child-friendly user interface was found to be another major drawback. Comments from both students and teachers indicated that a typical class was mixed sex and had a wide range of reading interests, levels and abilities. One of the immediate difficulties was that there was a great lack of children's literature with contemporary themes inside NSWL that would enable 'real-world interactions' for the students – 'real-world interactions' that these young readers could refer to, based on their own personal experiences, or sensory as learners. Real-world experiences could usually evoke keen attention and a sense of wonder from children. The importance of book choice was pointed out by other experts who suggested that providing students with different choices appropriate to the reading interests and abilities contributes

²⁴⁶ KRASHEN, S. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited ; WORTHY, J. (1998) "'On Every Page Someone Gets Killed!' Book Conversations You Don't Hear in School." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Vol. 41, No. 7, pp. 508-517 ; PRICHARD, Lyn. (May, 2000) "Understanding the Reluctant Male Reader: Implications for the Teacher Librarian and the School Library." *Access*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 11-14.

greatly to students' interest in books and motivates them to read.²⁴⁷ Although NSWL failed to motivate more students to read voluntarily, a small group of students indicated that they "enjoyed" using NSWL, as evidenced by the survey results and in the student interviews. This enjoyment was also demonstrated by the after-school logon statistics, as well as the regular streaming sessions that occurred on weekends and holidays.

Findings from this study also indicated that there were distinctive gendered differences in reading practices amongst the student population. Boys and girls of the same age were reading books with marked differences in terms of level of sophistication, language, plot and subject matter. Evidence suggested that girls read comparatively more poetry, and more fiction (see Section 4.3.2). Girls are also better readers, and more motivated readers, when compared with boys. Reading ability is influenced by the amount of reading that a student does.²⁴⁸ A large proportion of the literature available inside NSWL is out-of-copy-right classical fiction, with storylines that appeal more to girls (for example, family and human relationships with female protagonists rather than more masculine adventure stories) and often requiring a higher level of reading proficiency on the part of the reader. For this reason, girls as a group found it easier to adapt NSWL to their regular reading diet, which eventually led to a slightly higher NSWL usage amongst girls.

6.3. Significance and Contributions of the Study

The significance of this study for educators lies in the fact they may gain an insight the role of school libraries and librarians in shaping students' reading practices in a digital environment. With this understanding, classroom teachers, school librarians and administrators might begin to see the possibilities and challenges posed by including digital online audio resources into school libraries. Findings from this study

²⁴⁷ MCCARTHY, S.J., J.V. HOFFMAN, and L. GALDA. (1999) "Readers in Elementary Classrooms: Learning Goals and Instructional Principles that Can Inform Practice." in J.T. GUTHRIE and D.E. ALVERMAN. (eds.) *Engaged Reading: Processes, Practices, and Policy Implications*. (pp. 46-80) New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press ; RUIZ, N.T., E. VARGAS, and A. BELTRAN. (2002) "Becoming a Reader and Writer in a Bilingual Special Education Classroom." *Language Arts*, Vol. 79, No. 4, pp. 297-309 ; TUNNELL, M.A. and J.S. JACOBS. (1989) "Using 'Real' Books: Research Findings on Literature Based Reading Instruction." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 470-477.

²⁴⁸ CIPIELEWSKI, J. and K.E. STANVOICH. (1992) "Predicting Growth in Reading Ability from Children's Exposure to Print." *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, Vol. 54, pp. 74-89.

should provide teachers and school librarians with a basic understanding of the variation in students' reading practices, especially in relation to gendered differences. Hopefully, they would make use of such information in the future when acquiring or selecting reading materials for their students that would suit their varying abilities, needs and interests. The findings might also provide Naxos Digital Services, Ltd. and other online-audio-resource developers with insights into better understanding their client-users' needs, and could thereby refine their products' requirements, or expand the literature coverage of their online resources.

The evidence from this study indicates that children have different learning styles, by using visual, aural, or tactile modalities. Hearing is an extremely important channel by which children receive information from a variety of sources. To be able to listen is also part of the total literacy requirements for children. Research indicated that 30% of school-aged children appear to be auditory, and prefer to receive information by hearing it.²⁴⁹ Unfortunately, although the chosen online audio-book resource (NSWL) could provide a variety of critical technological advantages over the traditional paper-books, the overall findings indicated that there was little change in children's overall reading practices during the course of this study. However, with greater engagement with the challenges posed by children's different reading levels and content coverage, online audio-books in the format of NSWL could, if further developed, be considered a convenient and potentially low-cost alternative for enriching children's reading experience.

6.4. Review of Study and Reflections on Methodology

With reference to the research methodologies, it was critical to include perspectives from the parents, school librarians, as well as classroom teachers of other disciplines, as the multiple sources of data contributed to a deeper understanding of what happened when NSWL was introduced to the students both in and outside of school. The voices of teaching staff, parents and comments from the student users provided a richer description of the influence of the actual reading while listening experience to

²⁴⁹ CHEN, Shu-Hsien L. (2004) "Improving Reading Skills Through Audiobooks." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, September, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 24.

NSWL. Through the course of this study, I have recognized the importance of forming a close working relationship with the two school librarians: that is involving them since the beginning of the study, from the project execution, to the actual data collection and the final data analysis. The reasons for adopting this close collaboration were simply that, in addition to the necessity of depending on the two school librarians to carry out the questionnaire surveys and to introduce NSWL to their students, it was also absolutely essential to rely on them to make sure that the study questions were operationalized and data able to be collected. After all, the two school librarians were the ones who knew best about their own students, and the person-power and other resources available for the study was limited. As a result, in addition to providing me with valuable advice on choosing and developing the most feasible research methodologies and instrumentations for this study, their experience and working knowledge with the students also served as important reference, providing further insights for the final data interpretation and analysis.

6.4.1. Methodological challenges and other technical constraints

In addition to NSWL software's inability to generate data regarding the duration of individual student users' logon sessions (see Section 3.9.7), the lack of a control group in this context has also made it impossible to determine whether any pre- and post-NSWL change in the reading habits amongst students was due to NSWL or other factors. For example, pre-post changes may have been due to the incentive programmes (see Section 3.10) or because the students were simply getting older. Additionally, there could have been testing effects whereby students' answers in the Post-Questionnaire survey were influenced by having taken part in the Pre-Questionnaire survey. Other technical constraints and methodological challenges encountered during the course of this study also included the following:

Questionnaire surveys on students - it was difficult to design questions that were easy and simple for these elementary-level students to answer, but at the same time could satisfy the school librarians' and the researcher's need to collect as much data as possible. Given the students' young age, I had to work closely with the two school librarians, to ensure that all the questionnaire items could be easily understood by the students. Before collecting the completed questionnaires, the two school librarians also needed to spend time and effort to double-check all the returned questionnaires,

to ensure that all the questionnaire items had been properly answered. Furthermore, since the two school librarians were dealing with over 290 students, it was simply not possible to ensure all the students would return on the same day to fill out the Post-Questionnaire during the library lesson five months later. There were bound to be absentees amongst the student participants at both schools each day. For the actual questionnaire surveys, the two school librarians also needed to constantly remind themselves to use the same set of vocabularies when explaining the questionnaire items to the students, so that all student participants could arrive at a common understanding when answering the questionnaires.

Student focus group interviews - it was difficult to maintain a high level of objectivity when comprehending and interpreting the qualitative data collected from the student focus group interviews.²⁵⁰ Secondly, certain student participants were more outspoken than the others. Occasionally, their strong opinions and outspoken attitudes tended to overwhelm or influence the others in the same focus group. Furthermore, it was also difficult to encourage the student participants to be as frank, and as outspoken as possible during the interviews, while at the same time not getting sidetracked.

Student population - due to the limited person-power and resources available, this study was confined to only two international elementary schools in Hong Kong. If this research study had been extended to other international schools or other local schools that also use English as the main medium of instruction, the findings might have painted a somewhat more diverse overall picture.

Duration of research - my five-month research into audio reading was relatively short compared with the work of Medcalf²⁵¹ and Dring²⁵², whose subjects read audio-books for between one and two years and showed substantial progress on normative tests over this longer period of research.

²⁵⁰ MARSHALL, Catherine and ROSSMAN, Gretchen B. (1995) *Designing Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Publications, pp. 81.

²⁵¹ MEDCALF, J. (1989) "Comparison of Peer Tutored Remedial Reading Using the Pause Prompt and Praise Procedure with an Individualized Tape-Assisted Reading Programme." *Educational Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 253-261.

²⁵² DRING, J. (1989) "The Impact of Tape Cassette Library on Reading Process." *Special Education*, Vol. 34, pp. 31-32.

Identifying/Defining factors that motivate students to read voluntarily - students' motivation to read is determined and could be easily influenced/affected by many different cultural and environmental factors (see Section 4.5). These factors could be social, domestic, psychological, instructional or environmental. Furthermore, reading and listening are very personal experiences, and personal perspectives tend to influence all reading and listening interpretations. According to Maynard, McKnight, and Keady, "*it is difficult to define the qualities that immediately interest readers since reading tastes are so individual.*"²⁵³ Different students might respond to the same audio-book differently, while some people tended to be aural-learners. Thus, the evidence of the impact on reading motivation and NSWL-user experiences was not always easily visible or measurable/quantifiable. Nevertheless, the current framework could provide the starting point for practitioners to examine the provision of reading experiences against the impact of the audio-book software in the school-library context. I would argue, therefore, that the findings of this study are particularly relevant to all members of teaching and library colleagues who are interested in using online audio-books for effective teaching.

Implementations of NSWL in classroom and school library - although some of the classroom teachers and library staff spoke of the advantages of using NSWL, they were equally vocal about the difficulties they encountered when trying to optimize the use of audio-books in the classroom. Some of the teachers felt pressured by the demands of the system, finding it difficult to integrate or even encourage using NSWL because of curricular demands, inconsistent scheduling, timetable clashes, and other time management issues. Other difficulties that emerged were concerned with the management and the limited hardware resources for the individual libraries. For example, given the diverse student populations and the limited amount of resources available at the two schools, there were simply not enough computer stations and headphones to cope with a class of twenty students, and there were merely three concurrent user-licenses available for each school site (see Section 5.6.1).

²⁵³ MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) "Children's Classics in the Electronic Medium." *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 185.

6.5. Implications of the Research Findings

Despite various limitations and technical constraints, this study has produced modest and yet useful evidence indicating the intricate interrelationships between ICT (in the format of audio-books), multimodality and their potential impacts on students' reading practices and multi-literacy development in a school-library setting. Meanwhile, this research has identified a series of different and yet closely related factors that could affect a given student's motivation to read. These factors need to be considered when implementing library programmes involving the use of online audio-books for the students in the future. These factors were: library environment, parental guidance, and interactions between choice, gendered differences and access, as well as the relationship between the level of reading materials and children's reading abilities and interests. All these factors are central to whether or not students choose to read voluntarily both at school and at home.

The findings of this study have highlighted the importance of providing a wide range of books with varying levels and differing genres in promoting interest and motivation in reading. When students engage in recreational reading, they need to select books that span the developmental levels. Choice increases students' interest in books and motivates them to read²⁵⁴, and increasing students' access to books and promoting interest in books can significantly influence students' motivation to read²⁵⁵ (see Section 4.4). The NAEP²⁵⁶ 1998 Reading Report Card highlighted the positive relationship between time given to the students to read their own self-selected books and reading performance, *"At 4th-grade ... frequently reading of self-selected books was associated with higher average reading scores. 4th-graders who reported being given time for this activity everyday outperformed their peers who reported given time*

²⁵⁴ MCCARTHY, S.J., J.V. HOFFMAN and L. GALDA. (1999) "Readers in Elementary Classrooms: Learning Goals and Instructional Principles that Can Inform Practice." in J.T. GUTHRIE and D.E. ALVERMAN. (eds.) *Engaged Reading: Processes, Practices, and Policy Implications*. (pp. 46-80) New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press ; TUNNELL, M.A. and J.S. JACOBS. (1989) "Using "Real" Books: Research Findings on Literature Based Reading Instruction." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 42, No. 6, pp. 470-477 ; WORTHY, J. (2002) "What Makes Intermediate-Grade Students Want to Read?" *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 6, pp. 568-569 ; WORTHY, J., M. MOORMAN and M. TURNER. (1999) "What Johnny Likes to Read is Hard to Find in School." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 12-27.

²⁵⁵ ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education ; GAMBRELL, L.B. (1996) "Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25 ; PALMER, B.M., R.M. CODLING and L.B. GAMBRELL. (1994) "In Their Own Words: What Elementary Students Have to Say About Motivation to Read." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 176-178.

²⁵⁶ NEAP - National Assessment of Educational Progress.

to do less often. Also, the performance of 4th-grade students who reported reading books of their own choosing once or twice was higher than that of students who reported doing so less than weekly."²⁵⁷ Another immediate reason for the decrease in the number of voluntary readers was the intensive schooling and changes in the learning environment. These factors suggested that to enhance students' motivation to read, it is important to create an environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity and interests of students by making the library a 'fun' and 'existing' place to learn and to read. The school library should therefore be an 'engaging', and 'motivating' venue that facilitates creative meaning-making activities, so that student will eventually see the act of reading as a form of 'pleasurable' pursuit, rather than as a task to be mastered – all these further reinforce the school library as a place that values all voices and multiple ways of being literate (see Section 2.3.3).

The findings of my study also support the contention that students who are motivated are more likely to 'enjoy' reading, and will choose to read more often. If children are enjoying reading, then they will simply become self-directed and read more. On the other hand, few unmotivated/reluctant readers were converted into avid users of this new online medium. As Clergy pointed out, in order to build motivation for long-lasting reading habits, energy, and enthusiasm, it is not enough to schedule library periods where the children are introduced to books, hear stories, circulate books and receive instructions for the use of books and the library. Cleary suggested that "*more direct guidance needs to be provided by the librarian, with experience that builds lasting skills and interest in book*."²⁵⁸ Thus, classroom teachers and school librarians should not depend solely on online audio-books to increase children's reading motivation. Their value and effectiveness as an educational tool also depends on how these online resources are used to support teaching and learning.

The findings of this study also highlighted that online audio-books were not designed to, and could never replace the traditional paper-books or live stories at least in the near future. Nevertheless, audio-books could, if developed and implemented properly, serve as a valuable, convenient supplement to enhance reading skills and experience

²⁵⁷ NAEP. (2000) *Fourth-Grade Reading Highlights 2000*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992-2000 Reading Assessments, pp. 98.

²⁵⁸ CLEARY, F. (1972) *Blueprints for Better Reading: School Programs for Promoting Skill and Interest in Reading*. New York, N.Y.: H.W. Wilson, pp. 8.

to a certain level. With the on-going decline in voluntary reading in our society, this study was concerned with what and why these young students are choosing or refusing to read for recreational purposes. Reading is a complex and multi-faceted process. In order to get them motivated or excited about reading, it needs an approach that integrates many elements. Unfortunately, there is no single 'magical' formula or tool for motivating students to read. According to the two school librarians' final comments regarding students' experiences with NSWL:

Final words from school librarians: *"Our overall experience with the NSWL has been a positive one. I have seen students engage with it successfully, and my opinion is that it can make a valuable contribution to their learning. The current generation of students, having grown up immersed in technology, have no problem accessing digital content online. The NSWL's ease of use, its accessibility at both school and at home, and the range of its content make it a worthwhile resource for a school library to hold. The audio presentation of classic literature introduces students to material they would otherwise have not been exposed to. On the other hand, it should also be recognized that the NSWL is plainly not geared towards the primary-school level. There is a lot of content that is too difficult for primary students to engage with. However, during the course of the study, I discovered that to exploit the full potential of the NSWL it is necessary to go beyond mere provision. This type of online resource is relatively new in school settings. Effective promotion of the resource is vital if the potential benefits of the resource are to be realized. At the primary-school level, there is often so much to handle day to day, often by only one person, that such attempts to introduce new and unfamiliar resources can fall by the wayside. I feel that this sometimes happened in our experience of using NSWL. One particular problem was that NSWL was regarded as a peripheral resource – more benefits would likely have been derived if there had been more opportunities for NSWL to have been made the focus of a topic or study. Better collaboration between teaching and library staff is needed."*

How can teachers and librarians maximize the potential benefits of online audio-books for students? As pointed out by the two school librarians, online audio-books are not an immediate 'cure' for reluctant readers or students with reading problems. Balajthy also echoed that computer-based resources for teacher reading do not provide a 'magical motivational cure'.²⁵⁹ After all, they are only a tool, and tools do not market themselves. Whether they could serve as an effective literacy tool for connecting the students to books depends entirely on how teachers and librarians incorporate them into their regular teaching or how they are promoted amongst the

²⁵⁹ BALAJTHY, E. (1989) *Computer and Reading: Lessons from the Past and the Technologies of the Future*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

students. Evidence suggested that listening to audio-books did not necessarily mean a passive mental activity. Listening to and understanding an audio-book that may last for long hours makes demands on one's intellect and concentration, which is comparable with reading a book. As students make progress towards reading, they will be motivated to obtain and read a print version of a book. After mastering the art of reading a book, children will derive intellectual and emotional pleasure from the written words. Students of varying abilities can use them to improve vocabulary, enhance comprehension, and improve reading fluency. Interviews with the school librarians also revealed that both native and English as second language (ESL) students could use them in learning the new language by imitating correct pronunciation, intonation, and inflection.

My findings and those of other researchers suggested that audio reading could, if the content and sensitivity to different learning styles was finessed, be used as a flexible scaffolding tool which can be adjusted to the students' needs, stretching their skills to a point within their grasp, with the aim of bridging independent silent reading.²⁶⁰ The message is that increasing long-term reading motivation and engagement does not result from a 'quick fix'. Reading motivation that is strong enough to last across weeks, months, and years is not made in a day.²⁶¹ The results might allow students and parents to go beyond the technological hardware and realize that these online audio resources are at least as educational and enjoyable as some of the users reported in this study.

*"It is a well known fact that school libraries play a prominent role in the promotion of learning activities. In fact, a good library determines the quality of a school. The modern concept of the school library/resource centre is that, it is the focal point of education in a school. It is the principle source of information for the students."*²⁶²

For successful reading programmes to take place in the library, it would also take the willingness of the school librarians to lead a collaborative effort of the traditionalists -

²⁶⁰ BYROM, Gillie. (1998) "If You Can't Read it Then Audio Read It." *Reading*, July, pp. 4.

²⁶¹ GUTHRIE, J. T. (2001) "Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading." *Reading Online*, Vol. 4, No. 8. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/handbook/guthrie/>

²⁶² KUMBAR, Rashmi. (2006) *"Application of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory for the Effective Use of Library Resources by K2 Students: an Experimented Model."* pp. 2. World Library and Information Congress: 72nd IFLA General Conference and Council, 20th – 24th August 2006, Seoul, Korea. Available at: <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/papers/142-Kumbar-en.pdf>

by collaborating with the other classroom teachers, the school librarians could create a more 'exciting' atmosphere, and a 'joyful' reading environment for the school library, coupled with a series of reading programmes involving the use of online audio-books that would effectively lead young readers into the world of literature. By entering that world the students will create for themselves, perhaps unknowingly, a very solid foundation for future literary experiences in college and in life.

6.6. Conclusion to Chapter 6

In this chapter, in addition to having answered all the research questions, I have summarized major findings and various important issues concerning the implementation and progress of this research study. In the next chapter, I give final conclusions, drawing upon the experiences and comments of the two school librarians. Based on these, I also make recommendations for further research, as well as a series of proposals for effective use of online audio resources for other school libraries or educators to consider.

CHAPTER 7

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recent technological developments have provided a wide range of electronic materials for education. All these new electronic materials have made significant impacts in schools, affecting the day-to-day activities in classrooms, as well as in school libraries. For example, students and teaching staff who previously did not utilize school libraries began to see various ways in which the online resources could enhance their teaching and learning. In addition, since the early 1990s, there has been an increase in the number of books that are becoming electronic, inter-active, and multi-functional. All of these developments have seriously challenged the classrooms and the school libraries to reduce its linear focus.

According to the Audio Publishers Association, the number of books transformed into sound recording has increased by 350% in the last fifteen years.²⁶³ Literacy, traditionally defined as the acquisition of the ability to construct and interpret written text, bounded by the concepts of fixed and linear text, is no longer adequate. Indeed, online audio-books have completely redefined the concepts of literacy and learning to meet the needs of a post-print society. Electronic-storybooks are in fact becoming increasingly important in developing children's literacy abilities. Using online audio-books in the classroom is considered one of the most effective ways to increase children's encounters with reading. The intention is that the additional exposure to reading, by being read to and following the written text, would increase the range and scope of their literacy practices, and their levels.

7.1. Recommendations for Future Researches

We librarians and educators must continue to refine our research instruments and assess the different factors that might be influential to our students' reading motivation and learning incentives. These factors could be social, domestic, instructional or environmental. We also must continue to challenge students to find

²⁶³ WYSOCKI, Barbara. (2005) "Louder, Please." *School Library Journal*, April, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 11.

the best, most credible resources available in various formats. Online audio-books are only a few of the many tools or aids available for learning to read, but these technical aids may help to make the school-day easier for those students who are not eager to read. However, it is likely that the limitations mentioned in the previous chapters would have some impact on the overall results of this research study. As a result, continued research is needed to understand more fully the impacts of the online audio-books on reading comprehension, and to discover their full potential uses. For example, further in-depth studies would benefit from making use of an online audio-book version which is identical, or at least more similar, to a paper-book. For instance, if students are encouraged to read online or electronic-books, or increasingly choose to read them, how do they compare with traditional paper-books? Researchers could also observe and compare the teaching of a class with an online audio-book and a regular paper-book of the same title. Secondly, the research could also be broadened out to involve a larger number of participants. Thirdly, it would also be worthwhile to investigate the effects of long-term use once the novelty value of the online audio-books has subsided, for example, by extending the research period to one or two full years. Additional avenues for research could include the following:

- variation amongst different age groups within secondary schools;
- comparison of audio-books covering different subjects;
- observing and comparing the teaching of a class with an online audio-books and a traditional paper-book;
- direct observation of young students' interactivities with the online audio-books in an objective and systematic fashion;
- extending the study to other international schools or other local schools that use English as the main medium of instruction.

In fact, Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) is only one of the many literature-based online audio-book databases available in the market. Several other software packages and book publishers have also marketed interactive computer, CD-ROM or online

audio-books. More research on various types of audio-book software would enable a more comprehensive picture of how readers respond to online audio-books. Furthermore, electronic-books are becoming more affordable and sophisticated. Many of the newly developed electronic-books not only have sound effects, and stimulating graphics, but also have animations and bilingual translations. It would be worthwhile for researchers to investigate how young students with reading difficulties or ESL²⁶⁴ children respond to these online audio-books. That is, to see whether they also have the potentials to improve the literacy of students who are not native speakers of English. Furthermore, in this study students were encouraged to choose whatever titles they liked to read from NSWL. What would happen if all students were given the same titles to read, and their choices/options were restricted to five to ten books only? Finally, findings also highlighted the importance of social interaction in motivating students to read. As a result, it would be interesting to observe the social interactions of the children using online audio-books under the school environment. It would also be worthwhile to involve the students in the data collection and analysis process. This new format of data collection and analysis would imply a move from the relatively distanced position of participant-observation to an action orientation, a position that would also imply personal investment in a process of change in the lives of the participants.²⁶⁵

7.2. Recommendations for Use of Online Audio-books

To become lifelong literacy learners, children must be motivated to engage in a variety of literacy activities. Classroom teachers and school librarians should, therefore, be more innovative in using different technologies to deliver instructions for learning, instead of depending on them to motivate the students. As innovators, we must ensure our instructional delivery methods are constantly fine-tuned.²⁶⁶ In order to enable the students to find the best and most credible resources in various formats for learning, librarians and teachers should work closely together and employ

²⁶⁴ ESL - English as second language.

²⁶⁵ DUTRO, Elizabeth. (2000) *Reading Gender/Gendered Readers: Girls, Boys and Popular Fiction*. Ph.D. dissertation. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, pp. 282.

²⁶⁶ CLARKE, R.E. (1983) "Reconsidering Research on Learning from Media." *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 53, No. 4, pp. 445-449.

both traditional and cutting-edge technologies so that students know what choices are available to them.

Children have different learning styles. To be able to listen is also part of the literacy requirements for children. Research indicates that 30% of school-aged children appear to be auditory, and prefer to receive information by hearing it.²⁶⁷ Thus, school librarians and classroom teachers could consider using online audio-books as a convenient alternative for enhancing students' reading experience, and they ought to be used along with other educational resources in both printed and online formats. However, they need to be fully developed as a resource in order to overcome the problems this dissertation has identified. To conclude this dissertation, I have identified a number of strategies for both teachers and librarians, allowing them to implement plans of regular usage of online audio-books that would enable them to maximize the benefits to be derived from this technology, and they are as follows:

- expand content in cultural, gendered and age related ways;
- integrating the use of audio-books into the regular classroom curriculum for raising the standards of literacy throughout the age ranges;
- integrating the use of audio-books in the school-library curricula as part of the regular and ongoing extra-curricular literacy activities for all students;
- outreach to parents – to invite parents to help identify ways to extend literacy learning into the home environment with the use of online audio-books as a 'pleasurable' activity;
- active marketing of all library resources in the form of reading programmes for all student users, and thereby creating students' awareness of the availability of the latest resources inside the school library;

²⁶⁷ CHEN, Shu-Hsien L. (2004) "Improving Reading Skills Through Audiobooks." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, September, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 24.

- encouraging the students to use various online books in combination with other printed resources during free-choice time;
- matching students with books for readability and interests - school librarians and classroom teachers should work together by taking a more proactive role in predicting patterns in the choices of literature amongst students.

School libraries act as a link between the students and resources, and the use of online audio-books may be integrated into the curriculum in order to respond to the urgent curriculum-driven quest for raising the standards of literacy and library-information skills at all ages. This would include redefining the scope and sequence of the library and classroom curricula, for example, by integrating the use of audio-books in the school library as a complementary reading programme. This could be a beneficial addition to the reading experience for children, and librarians can also work with parents to identify ways to extend literacy learning into the home environment as a 'pleasurable' activity. Researchers have stressed the importance of planned programmes that encourage 'pleasurable' experiences with literature for children and create enthusiasm for books.²⁶⁸ As a result, these 'planned' reading programmes involving the use of online audio-books could be integrated with other extra-curricular literacy activities or reading incentive programmes that could be made a permanent addition to the classroom and school-library curricula all year long. For effective implementation of such programmes, classroom teachers and other educators need to be properly oriented as to how they can make the best use of various resources available in the library to supplement their regular classroom teaching.

Raising students' awareness of the availability of the resources is one of the core responsibilities and services of the school library. School librarians can also take an active role in providing additional services to their young users, including actively promoting the various online resources available via the school library. Through librarian interactions, by active promotion through the libraries and classrooms, students are constantly reminded of the many additional benefits of the audio-books.

²⁶⁸ ARBUTHNOT, M.H. and Z. Sutherland. (1977) *Children and Books*. (5th ed.) Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman & Co. ; CULLINAN, E. (1977) "Books in the Life of the Young Child." in *Literature and Young Children*. B. CULLINAN and C. CARMICHAEL, (eds.) Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English ; SMITH, J.A. and M. PARKER. (1977) *Word Music and Word Magic: Children's Literature Methods*. Newton, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon.

Reading-promotion activities can help entice students to read.²⁶⁹ *"Visibility of new books is the key to increase circulation ... students are more likely to checkout new books that are attractively displayed and easily located. And there is no exception for online audio-books."*²⁷⁰ Literacy and the enjoyment of reading can be further promoted by permitting and encouraging the students to use various online books and other printed resources during free-choice time, such as lunch, and recess. *"Simply providing texts which match students' current interests will not move them forward in interests. It is important to acknowledge a child's interests and abilities and gender, but it is important also to exercise professional responsibility to support the child's development."*²⁷¹ As a result, librarians should also try to predict patterns in the selection of literature amongst students and, according to such patterns, series of theme-oriented reading incentive programmes or exhibitions surrounding the use of audio-books could be implemented or co-hosted by the school librarians or classroom teachers to further promote students' literacy skills and reading motivation by encouraging them to make maximum use of all resources (both electronic and printed) available in the school library.

²⁶⁹ MOYER, Mary. (2007) "Book Alive: Reading Incentive Programs for High School Students." *Library Media Connection*, April/May, Vol. 25, No. 7, pp. 12.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) "Gendered Readings: Helping Boys Develop as Critical Readers." *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 67.

7.3. Final Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has not found substantial and convincing found evidence indicating that the use of the chosen online resource (NSWL) could enhance students' motivation to read. However, at least in its current form, NSWL has the potential to be a low-cost enhancement for children's reading experience, as well as to serve as a convenient and automated substitute for adults reading aloud. Although NSWL might well provide a variety of critical technological advantages over paper-books, the overall findings indicated that there was little change in children's overall reading practices during the course of this study. Indeed the evidence suggested that the amount of voluntary reading carried out by students had actually decreased, due to a series of NSWL's disadvantages identified in this study. The disadvantages identified were that in addition to a lack of a child-friendly user-interface, there was a great lack of contemporary literature appropriate to students' age, reading abilities and cultural interests. Furthermore, a majority of literature inside NSWL tends to appeal mainly to girl readers. A further reason for the decrease in the number of voluntary readers might also be to do with the organizing of schooling; there was an increase in intensive schooling and other changes in learning environment.

Evidence produced in this research suggests that students' motivation to read depends on a variety of factors. Thus, online audio-books should not be expected to function as an immediate 'cure' for reluctant readers. They are also not designed to replace the traditional paper-books or live stories in the near future. Additionally, there is no single 'magical' formula or tool for motivating students to read. The value and effectiveness as an educational tool also depends on the reading-ability level and the appropriateness of the literature inside the resource, as well as how such online resources are used to support their teaching and learning. As a result, effective promotion of the reading resource is equally vital if the potential benefits of such resource are to be realized. Most importantly, the resource (NSWL) itself also needs to be better developed in order to overcome many of the limitations this dissertation has identified.

In other words, given the limitations and other technical constraints posed by the chosen online audio resource (NSWL), further research would be needed in order to

measure the extent and effectiveness of online audio-books as a reading motivational tool for elementary students. Further research would include choosing an online audio resource that:

- has a more child-friendly user interface;
- provides a more balanced coverage of audio-book titles that appeal to the reading interests and preferences of both sexes;
- provides a richer collection of literature by better-known and culturally relevant authors, with more contemporary themes that match the reading-ability level of elementary students;
- preferably, with a software design that could facilitate the researcher to determine whether individual login sessions belonged to the same or different users, and so on.

REFERENCES

AKINS, S.J. (2001) *Constructing Visual Literacy Teaching: an Investigation of Two Primary School Teachers' Construction of Visual Literacy Teaching*. Unpublished honours dissertation. University of Tasmania. Launceston, Australia.

ALLINGTON, R.L. (2001) *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs*. New York, N.Y.: Addison Wesley Longman.

ALVERMANN, D.E. (ed.) (2002) *Adolescents and Literacies in a Digital World*. New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang.

American Association of School Librarians and Association for Education Communications and Technology. (1998) *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago, Ill.: American Library Association.

ANDERSON, M.A., N.A. TOLLEFSON and E.C. GILBERT. (1985) "Giftedness and Reading: a Cross-Sectional View of Differences in Reading Attitudes and Behaviors." *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 186-189.

ANDERSON, R.C. (1977) "The Notion of Schema and the Educational Enterprise." in R.C. ANDERSON. [et. al.] (eds.) *Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.

ANDERSON, R.C., E.H. HIEBERT, J.A. SCOTT, and I.A.G. WILKINSON. (1984) *Becoming a Nation of Readers: the Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education.

ANDERSON, R.C., P.T. WILSON, and L.G. FIELDING. (1988) "Growth in Reading and How Children Spend Their Time Outside of School." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 285-303.

ANDERSON-INMAN, Lynne. (1997) "Electronic Books for Secondary Students." *Journal of Adolescent: Adult Literacy*. March, Vol. 40, No. 6, pp. 486-491.

ARBUTHNOT, M.H. and Z. Sutherland. (1977) *Children and Books*. (5th ed.) Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman & Co.

ASKOV, E. and T. FISHBACK. (1973) "An Investigation of Primary Pupils' Attitude Toward Reading." *Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol. 41, pp. 1-7.

AU, K.H. and T.E. RAPHEL. (2000) "Equity and Literacy in the Next Millennium." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 170-188.

Audio Publishers Association (APA). Available at:
<http://www.audiopub.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>

AUSUBEL, D.P. (1967) "Cognitive Theory of School Learning." in L. SIEGEL. (ed.) *Instruction*. (pp. 99-107) San Francisco, Calif.: Chandler.

- BALAJTHY, E. (1989) *Computer and Reading: Lessons from the Past and the Technologies of the Future*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- BANDURA, A. (1997) *Self-Efficacy: the Exercise of Control*. New York, N.Y.: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- BARRON, Daniel E. (February, 2001) "E-Everything and the School Library Media Specialist: Grist for the Mill (Part 2)." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, Vol. 17, No. 6, pp. 49-51.
- BARRS, Myra. (1993) "Introduction: Reading the Difference." in Myra BARRS and Sue PIDGEON. (eds.) *Reading the Difference: Gender and Reading in Elementary Classrooms*. (pp. 1-11) London: CLPE.
- BARTON, Rhonda. (2006) "No More Story Lady." *Northwest Education Magazine*, Vol. 9, No. 1. Available at: <http://www.nwrel.org/nwedu/09-01/story.asp>
- BEERS, Kylene and Barbara G. SAMUELS. (eds.) (1998) *Into Focus: Understanding and Creating Middle School Readers*. Norwood, Mass.: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- BERNSTEIN, B. (1996) *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- BERTHHOFF, A.E. (ed.) (1984) *Reclaiming the Imagination: Philosophical Perspectives for Writers and Teachers of Writing*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook.
- BLAKELY, W. Paul. (March, 1958) "Reading of Comic Books by Seventh-Grade Children." *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 6, pp. 326-330.
- BOLTER, J.D. and R. GRUSIN. (2000) *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press.
- Bradbury Elementary School – Homepage.* Available at: <http://www.bradbury.edu.hk/>
- BRAXTON, Barbara. (2007) "Developing Your Reading-Aloud Skills." *Teacher Librarian*, April, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 56-58.
- BRAXTON, Barbara. (2007) "Read-Alouds: Choosing the Right Book." *Teacher Librarian*, February, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 52-53.
- BREIVIK, P. (1985) "Putting Libraries Back in the Information Society." *American Libraries*, November, Vol. 16, No. 10, pp. 723.
- BRUNER, J. (1969) "Cognitive Consequence of Early Sensory Deprivation." in R. SPRINTHAL and N. SPRINTHAL (eds.) *Educational Psychology: Selected Readings*. New York, N.Y.: Van Nostrand-Reinhold, pp. 34-36.

- BUZZEO, Toni. (2007) "Literacy and the Changing Role of the Elementary Library Media Specialist." *Library Media Connection*, April/May, Vol. 25, No. 7, pp. 18-19.
- BYROM, Gillie. (1998) "If You Can't Read it Then Audio Read It." *Reading*, July, pp. 3-7.
- CALLAWAY, N. (1981) "What Turns Children "On" or "Off" in Reading." *Reading Improvement*, 18, pp. 214-217.
- CAMPBELL, M.B. and M.M. KMIECIK (2004) "The Greatest Literacy Challenges Facing Contemporary High School Teachers: Implications for Secondary Teacher Preparation." *Reading Horizons*, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 1-25.
- CHEN, Shu-Hsien L. (2004) "Improving Reading Skills Through Audiobooks." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, September, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 22-25.
- Chicago Board of Education. (1991) *Recreational and Enrichment Reading: Elementary School*. Chicago, Ill.: Ted. D. Kimbrough.
- CHILDRESS, Glenda T. (Fall, 1985) "Gender Gap in the Library: Different Choices for Girls and Boys." *Top of the News*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 69-73.
- CHURCH, Ellen Booth. (2007) "Reading Aloud-Artfully!" *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, January/February, Vol. 21, No. 4. pp. 5-10.
- CIPIELEWSKI, J. and K.E. STANVOICH. (1992) "Predicting Growth in Reading Ability from Children's Exposure to Print." *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, Vol. 54, pp. 74-89.
- CLARKE, R.E. (1983) "Reconsidering Research on Learning from Media." *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 53, No. 4, pp. 445-449.
- CLEARY, F. (1972) *Blueprints for Better Reading: School Programs for Promoting Skill and Interest in Reading*. New York, N.Y.: H.W. Wilson.
- CODY, B. (1973) *Using Literature with Young Children*. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown.
- COLEMAN, G. (2004) "E-books and Academics: an Ongoing Experiment." *Felicitas*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 124-125.
- CONNELL, R. (1995) *Masculinities*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press.
- CONSIDINE, D.M. and G. E. HALEY (1992) *Visual Messages: Integrating Imagery into Instruction*. Englewood, Co.: Teacher Ideas Press.
- COPE, B. and K. KALANTZIS. (eds.) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. Melbourne: Macmillan.

CRAMER, E.H. (1994) "Connecting in the Classroom: Ideas from Teachers." in E.H. Cramer and M. Castle (eds.) *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain in Reading Education*. (pp. 125-141) Newark, De.: International Reading Association.

CULLINAN, E. (1977) "Books in the Life of the Young Child." in *Literature and Young Children*. B. CULLINAN and C. CARMICHAEL. (eds.) Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English.

DEJEAN, Jillian. (1995) "CD-ROM Talking Books: a Case Study of Promise and Practice." Paper presented at the *Annual Conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education* (23rd June, 1995. Montreal, Quebec, Canada).

DEJONG, Maria. (March, 2002) "Quality of Book-Reading Matters for Emergent Readers: an Experiment with the Same Book in Regular or Electronic Format." *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Vol. 94, No. 1, pp. 145-55.

DEJONG, Maria and Adriana G. BUS. (2004) "The Efficacy of Electronic Books in Fostering Kindergarten Children's Emergent Story Understanding." *Reading Research Quarterly*. October, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 378-393.

DEMO, W. (1986) *The Idea of Information Literacy in the Age of High Tech*. Unpublished paper, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Dryden, N.Y. ED282537.

DOANE, Mary Ann. (1985) "The Voice in the Cinema: the Articulation of Body and Space." in Elisabeth Weis and John BELTON. (eds.) *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*. (pp. 162-176) N.Y.: Columbia UP.

DORRELL, L. and E. CARROLL. (1981, August) "Spiderman at the Library." *School Library Journal*. Vol. 27, pp. 17-19.

DUNCUM, Paul. (2004) "Visual Culture Isn't Just Visual: Multiliteracy, Multimodality and Meaning." *Studies in Art Education*, Spring, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 252-265.

DURRANT, C. and C. BEAVIS. (eds.) (2001) *P(ICT)ures of English: Teachers, Learners, and Technology*. Melbourne, VIC, Australia: Wakefield Press.

DUTRO, Elizabeth. (Dec. 2001/Jan. 2002) "'But That's a Girls' Book!' Exploring Gender Boundaries in Children's Reading Practices." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 376-384.

DUTRO, Elizabeth. (2000) *Reading Gender/Gendered Readers: Girls, Boys and Popular Fiction*. Ph.D. dissertation. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, pp. 282.

DREHER, M.J. (2000) "What Will be the Demands of Literacy in the Workplace in the Next Millennium?" *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 381-382.

- DRING, J. (1989) "The Impact of Tape Cassette Library on Reading Process." *Special Education*, Vol. 34, pp. 31-32.
- EISENBERG, N., C.L. MARTION and R.A. FABES. (1996) "Gender Development and Gender Effects." in D. BERLINER and R.C. CALFEE (eds.) *Handbook of Educational Psychology*. (pp. 358-396) New York, N.Y.: Macmillan.
- ELDREDGE, L. (1991) "An Experiment with a Modified Whole Language Approach in First-Grade Classrooms." *Reading Research and Instruction*, Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 21-38.
- ELLEY, W.B. (1992) *How in the World Do Students Read?* Hamburg, Germany: International Association for the Evaluation Achievement.
- EMIG, J. (1983) *The Web of Meaning: Essays on Writing, Teaching, Learning and Thinking*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook.
- FIELDING, L.G. and P.D. PEARSON. (1994) "Reading Comprehension: What Works." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 51, No.5, pp. 62-68.
- FIELDING, L.G, P.T. WILSON, and R.C. ANDERSON. (1986) "A New Focus on Free Reading: the Role of Trade Books in Reading Instruction." in T.E. RAPHEL (eds.) *The Contexts of School-Based Literacy*. (pp. 149-160) New York, N.Y.: Random House.
- FISCH, Shalom M. and Jennifer S. SHULMAN. (2001) "Reading Between the Pixels: Parents-Child Interaction While Reading Online Storybooks." Paper presented at the *Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development*. (Minneapolis, MN, 19th-22nd April, 2001).
- FLOWER, L. (1989) "Cognition, Context, and Theory Building." *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 282-311.
- Free Phonetics Worksheets*. Available at: <http://genkienglish.net/phonicsws.htm>
- GABRIEL, Mary (1998) *Audiobooks Turn Bars into Mobile Classroom*. Reuters.
- GALLIK, J.D. (1999) "Do They Read for Pleasure? Recreational Reading Habits of College Student." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, Vol. 42, pp. 480-489.
- GAMBRELL, Linda R. (1996) "Creating Classroom Cultures that Foster Reading Motivation." *The Reading Teacher*, September, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 14-25.
- GARDINER, S. (2001) "Ten Minutes a day for Silent Reading." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 59, No. 2, pp. 32-35.
- GARNER, R. and M.C. GILLINGHAM. (1998) "The Internet in the Classroom: Is It the End of Transmission-Oriented Pedagogy?" in D. REINKING, M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, and R.D. KIEFFER (eds.) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. (pp. 221-231) Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.

GAVER, M. (1963) *Effectiveness of Centralized Library Service in Elementary School*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

GREER, Julia T. (1994) "Student Attitude Regarding a Reading Workshop: the Effects of the Process." *ERIC* (ED372364). Available at: http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_andERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED372364&_andERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_accnoandaccno=ED372364

GRANT, Jamillah M. A. (2004) "Are Electronic Books Effective in Teaching Young Children Reading and Comprehension?" *International Journal of Instructional Media*. Summer, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 303-308.

GREANEY, V. and M. CLARKE. (1973) "Longitudinal Study of the Effects of Two Reading Methods on Leisure-Time Reading Habits." in *Reading: What of the Future?* D. MOYLE (eds.) (pp. 107-114) London: United Kingdom Reading Association.

GREANEY, Vincent. (1980) "Factors Related to Amount and Type of Leisure Time Reading." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 337-357.

GUTHRIE, J. T. (2001) "Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading." *Reading Online*, Vol. 4, No. 8. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/handbook/guthrie/>

GUTHRIE, J.T. and A. WIGFIELD. (2000) "Engagement and Motivation in Reading." in M.L. KAMIL, P.B. MOSENTHAL, P.D. PEARSON and R. BARR. (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research*. (pp. 403-422) New York, N.Y. Longman.

GUTHRIE, J.T. W.D. SCHAFER and C. HUANG (2001) "Benefits of Opportunity to Read and Balanced Reading Instruction for Reading Achievement and Engagement: a Policy Analysis of State NAEP in Maryland." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 94, No. 3, pp. 145-162.

HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) *The Children's Reading Choices Project*. Nottingham, U.K.: University of Nottingham.

HALL, Christine and Martin COLES. (1997) "Gendered Readings: Helping Boys Develop as Critical Readers." *Gender and Education*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 61-68.

HARRIS, A.J. and E.R. SIPAY. (1990) *How to Increase reading Ability: a Guide to Developmental and Remedial Methods*. (9th ed.) White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.

HAWISHER, G. and C. SEIFE (Eds.) (2000) *Global Literacies and the World Wide Web*. New York, N.Y.: Routledg.

HOLDAWAY, D. (1979) *The Foundations of Literacy*. New York, N.Y.: Ashton Scholastic.

- Hoover Institution – Education Next – The Open Classroom. Available at: <http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/3288371.html>
- HORNSBY, D. and D. SUKAMA. (1986) *Read on: a Conference Approach to Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.
- HUBBARD, Susan. (1987) *Information Skills for an Information Society: a Review of Research*. ERIC Digest. Available at: <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9218/information.htm>
- HUCK, S. (1976) *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*. (3rd ed.) New York, N.Y.: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
- HUMBLE, Amy Leah. (2000) *A Comparison Study of the Traditional Reading Strategy of Reading Aloud with an Adult and the Technology Based Strategy of Computerized Talking Books*. [S.l.]: Dept. of Teacher Education, Johnson Bible College.
- JAMES, P. D. (1993, 14th June) "English Must Be Saved." *Times*, pp. 14.
- KIBBY, M.W. (2000) "What Will be the Demands of Literacy in the Workplace in the Next Millennium?" *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 380-381.
- Kingston Elementary School – Homepage. Available at: <http://www.kingston.edu.hk/>
- KINZER, C. and D.J. LEU, jr. (1997) "The Challenge of Change: Exploring Literacy and Learning in Electronic Environment." *Language Arts*, Vol. 74, pp. 126-135.
- KOLENCIK, Patricia Liotta. (2001) *Principle and Teacher-Librarians: Building Collaborative Partnerships in the Learning Community*, Ed.D. dissertation, Pittsburgh, [Pa.]: University of Pittsburgh.
- KOZLOFF, Sarah. (1995) "Audio Books in a Visual Culture." *Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 83-109.
- KRASHEN, S. (1993) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited.
- KRASHEN, S.D. (1995, Summer) "School Libraries, Public Libraries, and the NAEP Reading Scores." *School Library Media Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 235-237.
- KRESS, G. and T. VAN LEEUWEN. (1996) *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.
- KUMBAR, Rashmi. (2006) "Application of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory for the Effective Use of Library Resources by K2 Students: an Experimented Model." *World Library and Information Congress: 72nd IFLA General Conference and Council*, 20th – 24th August 2006, Seoul, Korea. Available at: <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/papers/142-Kumbar-en.pdf>

LEASK, Marilyn and John MEADOWS. (eds.) (2000) *Teaching and Learning with ICT in the Primary School*. London: Routledge.

LEMKE, B. (1999) "Metamedia Literacy: Transforming Meanings and Media." in D. REINKING, M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, and R.D. KIEFFER (eds.) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. (pp. 283-301). Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.

LUKE, Carmen. (2003, July-September) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinary." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 389-402.

LUKE, Carmen. (2003) "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinarity: Media and Online Literacy Studies, Online-Only Supplementary Material." *International Reading Association*. Available at: http://www.reading.org/General/Publications/Journals/RRQ/SupplementalContent/rrq_rrq-38-3-hagood-supp_4.aspx?mode=redirect&D=10.1598/RRQ.38.3.4

MAGGART, Z.R. and M.V. Zintz (1992) *The Reading Process: the Teacher and the Learner*. (6th ed.) Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown.

MARSHALL, Catherine and ROSSMAN, Gretchen B. (1995) *Designing Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

MAXEY, Laurie. (2006) *Using Commercially Produced Audio Books to Improve Students' Reading Levels*. Available at: <http://gse.gmu.edu/assets/docs/lmtip/vol2/L.Maxey.doc>

MAYNARD, May and Cliff MCKNIGHT (2001) "Electronic Books for Children in UK Public Libraries." *The Electronic Library*. Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 405-424.

MAYNARD, Sally, Cliff MCKNIGHT and Melanie KEADY. (1999) "Children's Classics in the Electronic Medium." *Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 184-201.

MAZZONI, S.A., L.B. GAMBRELL, and R.L. KORKEAMAKI. (1999) "A Cross-Cultural Perspective of Early Literacy Motivation." *Reading Psychology*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 237-253.

MCCARTHY, S.J., J.V. HOFFMAN, and L. GALDA. (1999) "Readers in Elementary Classrooms: Learning Goals and Instructional Principles that Can Inform Practice." in J.T. GUTHIRE and D.E. ALVERMAN. (eds.) *Engaged Reading: Processes, Practices, and Policy Implications*. (pp. 46-80) New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press.

MCKENNA, M.C., D.J. KEAR and R.A. ELLSWORTH. (1995) "Children's Attitudes Toward Reading: a National Survey." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 934-955.

MCKENNA, M.C., B.D. STRATTON, M.C. GRINDLER and S.J. JENKINS. (1995) "Differential Effects of Whole Language and Traditional Instruction on Reading

Attitudes." *Journal of Reading Behavior*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 19-44.

MCQUILLAN, J. (1998). *The Literacy Crisis: False Claims, Real Solutions*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

MEDCALF, J. (1989) "Comparison of Peer Tutored Remedial Reading Using the Pause Prompt and Praise Procedure with an Individualized Tape-Assisted Reading Programme." *Educational Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 253-261.

MEEK, Margaret. (1991) *On Being Literate*. London: Bodley Head.

MIEDZIAN, M. (1991) *Boys Will be Boys: Breaking the Link between Masculinity and Violence*. New York, N.Y.: Doubleday.

MIKULECKY, L. (2000) "What Will be the Demands of Literacy in the Workplace in the Next Millennium" *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 379-380.

MILLARD, E. (1993) *Developing Readers in Middle Years*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

MILLARD, E. (1997) *Differently Literate: Boys, Girls and the Schooling Literacy*. London: Falmer Press.

MOHR, Kathleen J. (2006) "Children's Choices for Recreational Reading: a Three-Part Investigation of Selection Preferences, Rationales, and Processes." *Journal of Literacy Research*, Vol. 38 No.1, pp. 81-104. Also available online at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3785/is_200601/ai_n16452270/pg_3?tag=content;coll

MORROW, L. (ed.) (1995) *Family Literacy: Connections in Schools and Communities*. New Jersey: International Reading Association Incorporation.

MORROW, L. (1983) "Home and School Correlates of Early Interest in Literature." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 76, No. 4, pp. 221-230.

MORROW, L.W. (1992). "The Impact of a Literature-Based Program on Literacy Development, Use of Literature, and Attitudes of Children from Minority Backgrounds." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 250-275.

MORROW, Lesley Mandel. (1985) *Promoting Voluntary Reading in School and Home*. Fastback 225. Available at: http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED261966&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED261966

MOYER, Mary. (2007) "Book Alive: Reading Incentive Programs for High School Students." *Library Media Connection*, April/May, Vol. 25, No. 7, pp. 10-12.

NAEP. (2000) *Fourth-Grade Reading Highlights 2000*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992-2000 Reading Assessments.

National Reading Research Center (Barbara Martin Palmer and Rose Marie Codling) (1994) "In Their Own Words: What Elementary Students Have to Say About Motivation to Read." *The Reading Teacher*, October, Vol. 48, No.2, pp. 176-178.

Naxos Spoken Word Library. Available at:
<http://www.NaxosSpokenWordLibrary.com/>

NEGROPONTE, N. (1995) *Being Digital*. New York, N.Y.: Knopf.

NELL, V. (1994) "The Insatiable Appetite." in *Fostering the Love of Reading: the Affective Domain*. CRAME, E.H., in CASTLES, N. (eds.) (pp. 41-52) Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

NELSON, Bryce. (1999) "Purposes of School Libraries." *ALKI: the Washington Library Association Journal*, March, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 10-11.

NEUMAN, S. (2002) "The Role of School Libraries in Elementary and Secondary Education." Presented at the *Whitehouse Conference on School Libraries Proceedings*, 4th June. Available at: <http://www.laurabushfoundation.com/Neuman.pdf>

NOLL, E., (1998) "Experiencing Literacy in and out of School: Case Studies of Two American Indian Youths." *Journal of Literacy Research*, Vol., 30, No. 2, pp. 205-232.

NORRIS, Nigel. (1997) "Error, Bias and Validity in Qualitative Research." *Educational Action Research*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 172-176.

OAKLEY, Grace. (March, 2003) "Improving Oral Reading Fluency (and Comprehension) Through the Creation of Talking Books." *Reading Online*. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/oakley/>

O'CONNOR, Rollanda E., Annika WHITE, H Lee SWANSON. (Fall, 2007) "Repeated Reading Versus Continuous Reading: Influences on Reading Fluency and Comprehension." *Exceptional Children*. Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 31- 46.

O'DAY, Pamela S. (2002) *Reading While Listening: Increasing Access to Print Through the Use of Audio Books*. Ph.D. dissertation. Dept. of Education, Lynch Graduate School of Education, Boston College.

OSMONT, Pip. (1987) "Teacher Inquiry in the Classroom: Reading and Gender Set." *Language Arts*, November, Vol. 64, No. 7, pp. 758-61.

"Phonic Worksheet." *The Online Teacher Resource*. Available at:
http://worksheets.teach-nology.com/language_arts/phonics/

PAILLIOTET, A.W. (1998) "Reading and Writing Across the Media: Using Diverse Educational Technologies in Literacy Learning." in R.M. BRANCH and M.A.

FITZGERALD (eds.) *Educational Media and Technology Yearbook 12* (pp. 76-93). Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited.

PAMLER, B.M. R.W. CODLING and L.B. GAMBRELL. (1994) "In Their Own Words: What Elementary Students Have to Say About Motivation to Read." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 176-178.

PARHAM, Charles. (1993) "CD-ROM Storybooks: New Ways to Enjoy Children's Literature." *Technology and Learning*, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 34-44.

PEARSON, P.D. and L. FIELDING. (1982) "Research Update: Listening Comprehension." *Language Arts*, Vol. 59, No. 6, pp. 617-629.

PEMBROKE, June Latricia. (1997) *Using a Special Reading Program to Modify the Attitudes of Fifth-Grade Male Students Toward Voluntary Reading*. Ph.D. dissertation. Urbana, Ill.: College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Campaign.

PFAU, D. (1967) "Effects of Planned Recreational Reading Programs." *Reading Teacher*, Vol. 21, pp. 34-39.

PHILIPS, D.C. (1987) "Validity and Qualitative Research: Why the Worry About Warrant Will Not Wane." *Education and Urban Society*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 9-24.

PHILIPS, Deborah. (2007) "Talking Books: the Encounter of Literature and Technology in the Audio Book" *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 293-306.

POLETTE, Nancy and Marjorie HAMLIM. (1975) *Reading Guidance in a Media Age*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

POLLACK, W. (1998) *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*. New York, N.Y.: Owl Books.

PRICHARD, Lyn. (May, 2000) "Understanding the Reluctant Male Reader: Implications for the Teacher Librarian and the School Library." *Access*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 11-14.

RASINKI, T. and N. PADAK. (2000) *Effective Reading Strategies: Teaching Children Who Find Reading Difficult*. (2nd ed.) Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.

Reading: Value of Reading Engagement for Children. Available at:
<http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2354/Reading-VALUE-READING-ENGAGEMENT-CHILDREN.html>

REINKING, D. (1992). "Differences between Electronic and Printed Texts: an Agenda for Research." *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 11-24.

REINKING, D. and L. BIRDWELL-BOWLES. (1991) "Computer in Reading and Writing." in R. BARR (ed.) *Handbook of Reading Research*, Vol. 2. (pp. 310-340) New York, N.Y.: Longman.

REINKING, D., M.C. MCKENNA, L.D. LABBO, L.D. and R.D. KIEFFER. (eds.) (1998) *Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.

REINKING, David and R. SCHREINER. (1985) "The Effects of Computer-Mediated Text on Measures of Reading Comprehension and Reading Behavior." *Reading Research Quarterly*, No. 20, No. 5, pp. 536-552.

REUTZEL, D. R., and WOLFERSBERSGER, M. (1996) "An Environmental Impact Statement: Designing Supportive Literacy Classrooms for Young Children." *Reading Horizons*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 266-282.

REYNOLDS, KIM. (1994) *Contemporary Juvenile Reading Habits*. Roehampton Institute.

ROBINSON, Joseph Samuel, Abu Bakar ZAITUN. (May/June 2006) "The Utilization and Integration of ICT Tools in Promoting English Language Teaching and Learning: Reflections from English Option Teachers in Kuala Langat Direct, Malaysia." *International Journal of Education Development Using Information and Communication Technology*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 4-14.

ROSENTHAL, N. (1995) *Speaking of Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

ROSS, E.P. and R.K. FLETCHER. (1989) "Responses to Children's Literature by Environment, Grade Level, and Sex." *Reading Instruction Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 22-28.

ROUTMAN, R. (1996) *Literacy at the Crossroads: Crucial Talk About Reading, Writing, and Other Teaching Dilemmas*. Portsmouth, N.H. Heinemann.

ROWE, K.J. (1990) "The Influence of Reading Activity at Home on Students' Attitude Towards Reading, Classroom Attentiveness and Reading Achievement." *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 61, No. 1, pp. 19-32.

RUIZ, N.T., E. VARGAS, and A. BELTRAN. (2002) "Becoming a Reader and Writer in a Bilingual Special Education Classroom." *Language Arts*, Vol. 79, No. 4, pp. 297-309.

SAMUELS, S. Jay. (1997) "The Methods of Repeated Readings." *The Reading Teachers*, Vol. 50, No. 5, pp. 376-381.

SHAPIRO, J. and W. WHITE (1991) "Reading Attitudes and Perceptions in Traditional and Nontraditional Reading Programs." *Reading Research and Instruction*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 52-66.

SHAPIRO, J.E. (1980) "Primary Children's Attitudes Toward Reading in Male and Female Teachers' Classrooms: an Exploratory Study." *Journal of Reading Behavior*, Vol. 12, pp. 255-257.

SHORE, R.B. (1968) "Perceived Influence of Peers, Parents, and Teachers on Fifth and Ninth Graders' Preferences of Reading Material." *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 47, 051, No. 86-16, pp. 829.

SIEGEL, Marjorie. (2006) "Reading the Signs: Multimodal Transformation in the Field of Literacy Education." *Language Arts*, September, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp. 65-77.

SILVERMAN, Kaja. (1988) *The Acoustic Mirror*. Bloomington: Indiana UP.

SLATER, D. (1997) *Consumer Culture and Modernity*. London: Polity Press.

SMITH, J.A. and M. PARKER. (1977) *Word Music and Word Magic: Children's Literature Methods*. Newton, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon.

SMITH, M.C. (1990) "A Longitudinal Investigation of Reading Attitude Development from Childhood to Adulthood." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 83, No. 4, pp. 215-219.

SMITH, Michael W. (2002) *"Reading Don't Fix no Chevys": Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

SNYDER, I. (2002) *Silicon Literacies: Communication, Innovation and Education in the Electronic Age*. London: Routledge.

SPAULDING, C.C. (1992) "The Motivation to Read and Write." in J.W. IRWIN and M.A. DOYLE. (eds.) *Reading/Writing Connections: Learning from Research*. (pp. 177-201). Newark, D.E.: International Reading Association.

SPREADBURY, Helen and David SPILLER. (1999) *Survey of Secondary School Library Users*. Loughborough, U.K.: Library and Information Statistics Unit (LISU), Dept. of Information Science, Loughborough University.

STANOVICH, K.E. (1986) "Matthew Effects in Reading: Some Consequences of Individual Differences in the Acquisition of Literacy." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 360-406.

STEVENSON, H.W. and R.S. NEWMAN. (1986) "Long-Term Prediction of Achievement and Attitudes in Mathematics and Reading." *Child Development*, Vol. 57, No. 3, pp. 646-657.

STICHT, T.G. and J.H. JAMES. (1984) "Listening and Reading." in P.D. PEARSON (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research*, Vol. 1, (pp. 293-317) New York, N.Y.: Longman, Inc.

Survey of U.K. Secondary School Libraries 1999. Available at: http://www.la-hq.org.uk/directory/prof_issues/ssl/ssl99.html

TALBOTT, S. (1998, 25th June-1st July). "Address." ALA Annual Conference, Washington. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/online/newes//annual.cfm>

TAYLOR, B.M., B.J. FRYE, and G.M. MARUYAMA. (1990) "Time Spent Reading and Reading Growth." *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 351-362.

TAYLOR, D. (1983) *Family Literacy*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

TAYLOR, D. and DORSEY-GAINES, C. (1988) *Growing Up Literate: Learning Form Inner-City-Families*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

"Teaching Literature at KS 1-2: Values and Classic Children's Books." *ITE English*. Available at: http://www.ite.org.uk/ite_topics/teachlitks12/009.html

TEALE, W.H. (1984) "Reading to Young Children: Its Significance for Literacy Development." in H. GOELMAN, A. OBERG and F. SMITH. (eds.) *Awakening to Literacy: the University of Victoria Symposium on Children's Response to a Literate Environment*. (pp. 110-121) Exeter, N.H.: Heinemann.

THEIN, M. (Summer, 1985) "Motivating Students to Become Successful in Reading." *Journal of Reading Improvement*, Vol. 22, pp. 104-108.

THIMMESCH, N. (1984) *Aliteracy: People Who can Read but Won't*. Washington, D.C: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

THORNBURG, D. G. (1993) "Intergenerational Literacy Learning with Bilingual Families: a Context for the Analysis of Social Mediation of Thought." *Journal of Reading Behaviour*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 323-352.

TOOMEY, D. and C. ALLEN. (1991) "Parental Involvement: Fostering Literacy Development in the Home." in E. FURNISS and P. GREEN. (eds.) *The Literacy Agenda: Issues for the Nineties*. South Yarra: Eleanor Curtain.

TUNNELL, M.A. and J.S. JACOBS. (1989) "Using 'Real' Books: Research Findings on Literature Based Reading Instruction." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 470-477.

U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. (2004) *School Libraries Work!* Washington, D.C.: Scholastic Library Publishing.

WALKER, B.J. (1992) *Supporting Struggling Readers*. Scarborough, Ontario: Pippin Publishing Corporation.

WALLBROWN, F.H. D.H. BROWN and A.W. ENGIN. (1978) "A Factor Analysis of Reading Attitudes Along with Measures of Reading Achievement and Scholastic Aptitude." *Psychology in the Schools*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 160-165.

WALMSLEY, S.A. (1991) "Literacy in the Elementary Classroom." in E.M. JENNINGS and A.C. PURVES. (eds.) *Literate Systems and Individual Lives: Perspectives on Literacy and Schooling*. (pp. 139-164) Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.

WENDELIN, K.H. and R.A. ZINCK. (1983) "How Students Make Book Choices." *Reading Horizons*, Vol. 23, pp. 84-88.

"Why Boys Don't Read." *ParentsCanada.com*. Available at: <http://www.parentscanada.com/developing/tweens/articles.aspx?listingid=109>

WIGFIELD, A., J.S. ECCLES, K.S. YOON, R.S. HAROLD, A. ARBERTON, K. FREEMAN-DOAN, and P.C. BLUMENFIELD. (1997) "Changes in Children's Competence Beliefs and Subjective Task Values Across the Elementary School Years: a Three-Year Study." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 89, No. 3, pp. 451-469.

WIGFIELD, Allan, Kathleen WILDE and Linda BAKER. (Summer, 1996) "The Nature of Children's Motivations for Reading, and Their Relations to Reading Frequency and Reading Performance." *National Reading Research Center, Universities of Georgia and Maryland, Reading Research Report*, No. 63.

WILLIAMS, D. and C. WAVELL. (2001) *Impact of the School Library Resource Centre on Learning*. Aberdeen: the Robert Gordon University for MLA – the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. Available at: <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/files/SLRCreport.pdf>

WILSON, Janell D. and Linda H. CASEY. (2007, Spring) "Understanding the Recreational Reading Patterns of Secondary Students." *Reading Improvement*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 40-49.

A Word about Motivation. Available at: <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/nagy/motivation.html>

WORTHY, J. (1998) "'On Every Page Someone Gets Killed!' Book Conversations You Don't Hear in School." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Vol. 41, No. 7, pp. 508-517.

WORTHY, J. (2002) "What Makes Intermediate-Grade Students Want to Read?" *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 55, No. 6, pp. 568-569.

WORTHY, J., M. MOORMAN and M. TURNER. (1999) "What Johnny Likes to Read is Hard to Find in School." *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 12-27.

WORTHY, J. and M. TURNER. (February, 1997) *Motivating Students to Read: Ideas from 6th Grade Students and Their Language Arts Teachers*. Paper presented at the Southwest Regional Conference of the International Reading Association, Fort Worth, TX.

WYSOCKI, Barbara. (April, 2005) "Louder, Please." *School Library Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 10-14.

(APPENDIX 1)
BRADBURY and KINGSTON SCHOOL LIBRARY
SPECIAL SERVICE CATEGORY CHECKLIST

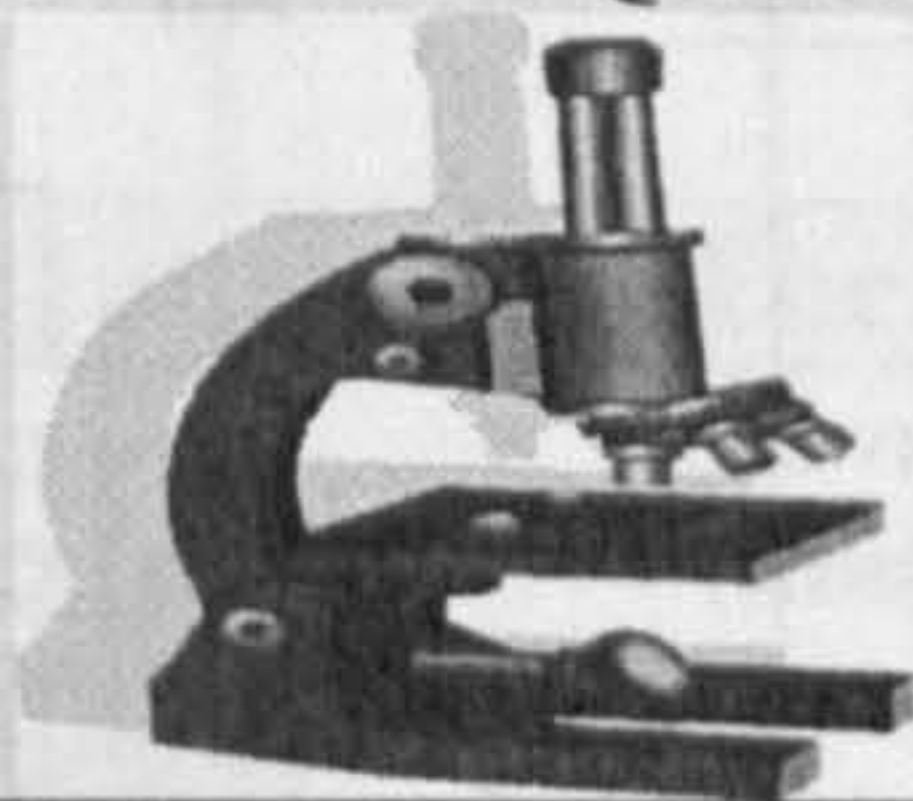
Direct Services to Classroom Teachers and Students Provided by the School Librarian:			
		<i>Bradbury</i>	<i>Kingston</i>
1. Teaching:	▪ Teaching library classes on the use of library resources or electronic catalogue to large or small groups of students.	✓	✓
	▪ Helping individual students find or use information.	✓	✓
	▪ <i>Helping individual or groups of students on their</i>	x	✓
	▪ Helping individual students use electronic catalogue or other resources.	✓	✓
2. Story Time & Reading Guidance:	▪ Proving book talks, reading contests or story times for students during library classes, lunch hours or as extra-	✓	✓
	▪ Giving individual book selection assistance to students	✓	✓
3. Consulting:	▪ Planning with teams or individual teachers on curriculum developments or incorporations of library resources to	✓	x
	▪ Locating or gathering materials for classroom teachers.	✓	✓
	▪ Teaching classroom teachers on the use of newly acquired electronic resources.	✓	✓
4. Supervision:	▪ Supervising students within the school libraries or elsewhere.	✓	✓
▪ Management and Operation Tasks:			
5. Management:	▪ Working on library budgets.	✓	✓
	▪ Meeting with school administrators on library budgets or programmes/activities.	✓	✓
	▪ <i>Scheduling of library classes and other library activities.</i>	x	✓
	▪ Supervising work of support staff or volunteers.	✓	✓
	▪ Communicating with other classroom teachers regarding school policies/scheduling/operations.	✓	✓
	▪ Taking part in staff meetings.	✓	✓
6. Cataloguing:	▪ Creating or editing cataloguing records.	✓	✓
	▪ Processing library materials.	✓	✓
	▪ Maintaining the electronic library catalogue.	✓	✓
7. Professional Development:	▪ Attending in-service training on library technologies.	✓	✓
	▪ Attending in-service on educational issues.	✓	✓
8. Planning:	▪ Planning lessons for library resources instructions.	✓	✓
	▪ Learning to use a piece of software in anticipation of teaching it to students and classroom teachers.	✓	✓
9. Selection:	▪ Reading reviews related to children's literature or library	✓	✓
	▪ Making purchase decisions on library materials.	✓	✓
10. Clerical:	▪ Issuing orders on library materials or correspondences with library service-vendors.	✓	✓
	▪ Filing of library documents.	✓	✓
	▪ Putting up library displays or exhibition of new books to promote the use of library materials.	✓	✓
11. Circulation:	▪ Checking in or out of library materials.	✓	✓
	▪ Editing patron data in circulation records.	✓	✓
	▪ Preparing overdue notices.	✓	✓
	▪ Re-shelving library materials.	✓	✓
12. Library Classes:	▪ Duration and frequency of library literacy classes organized for students each week.	✓ ²⁷²	✓ ²⁷³

²⁷² **Bradbury School** - every class in the school (1st- to 6th-grade) is timetabled to come to the library for one session per week. The length of one session is about fifty minutes. However, 5th- and 6th-grade students do not have library skills classes. They come to the library every week, but in general will do research or general reading exercises. On the other hand, for 3rd- and 4th-year students, the school librarian will deliver formal library skills lessons to them as small groups. Other groups in the class will be doing other exercises, so the students in those year groups will receive a specific library skills lesson perhaps only once per month.

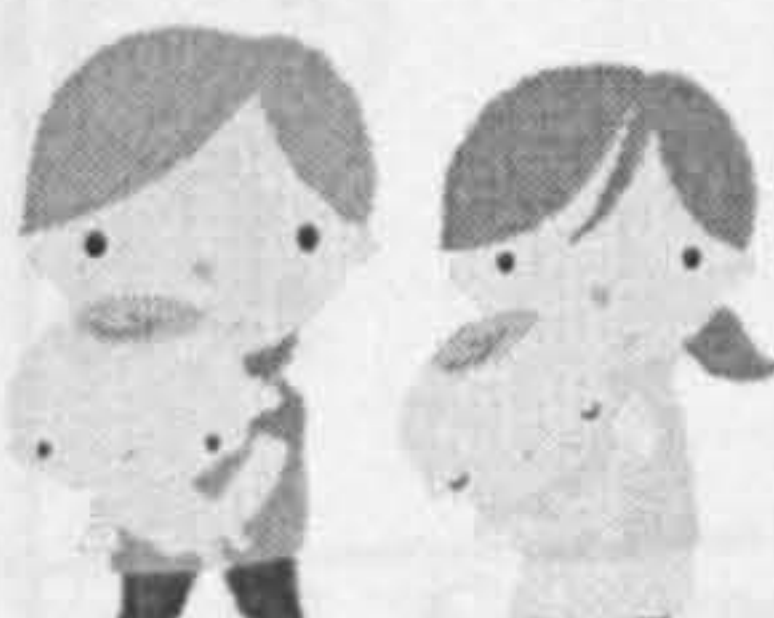
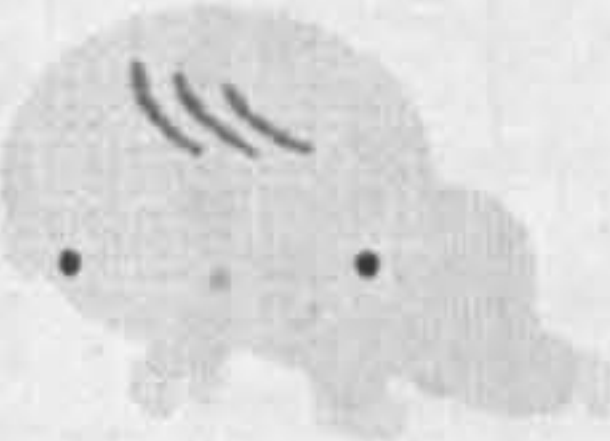


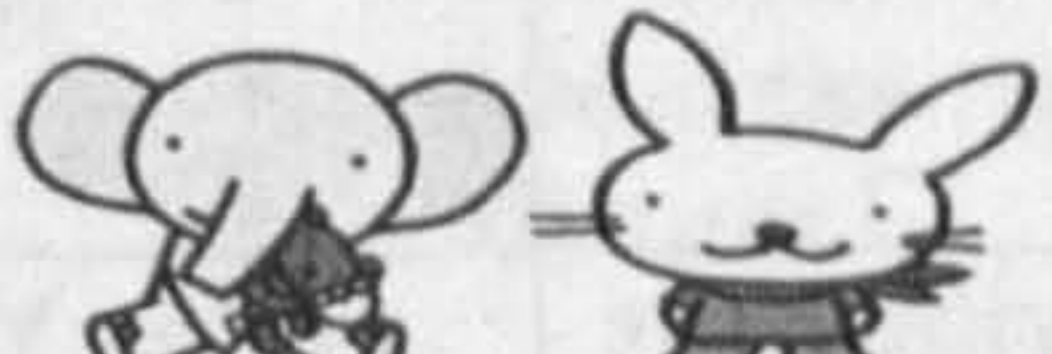




²⁷³ **Kingston School** - the school librarian conducts library skills classes to students each week, and each class lasts for about 55 minutes.

(APPENDIX 2)

Student Pre/Post-Questionnaire


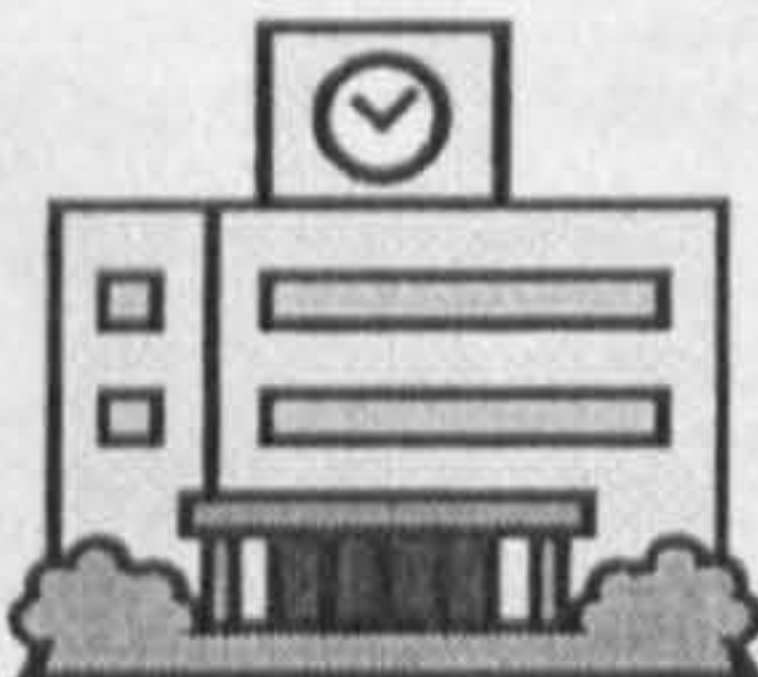

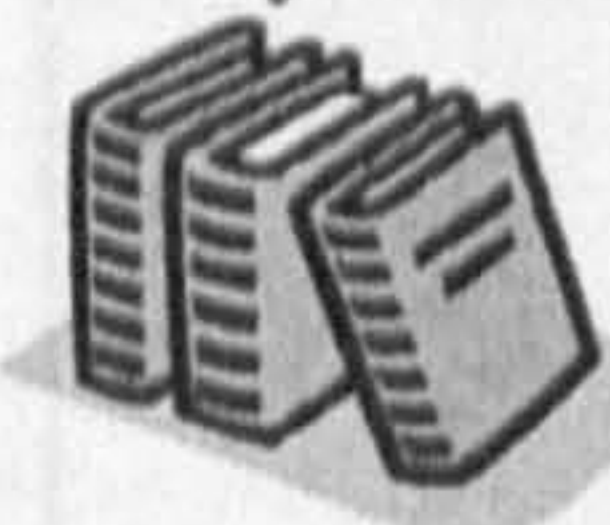
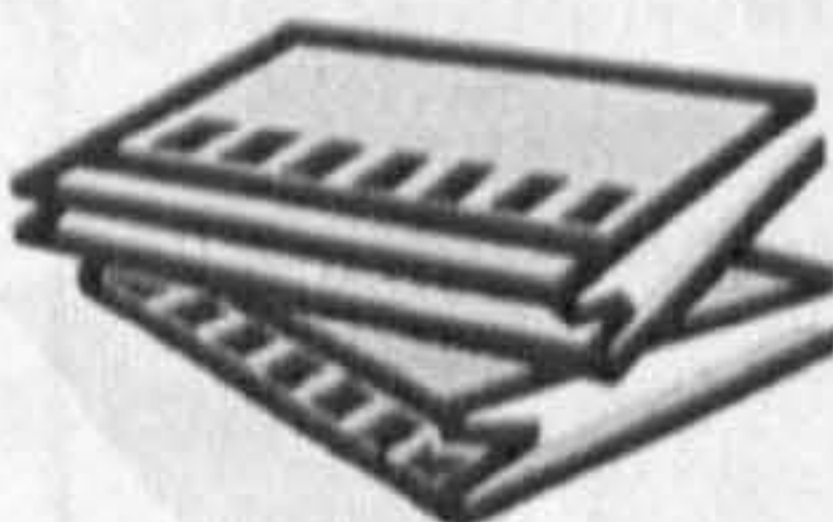




(A) General Information:

<p>1. Gender</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Girl / Female <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Boy / Male <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>2. How often do you visit the school library?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Every day <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Every week <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Every month <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Once a term <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Once a year <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Never <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Cannot remember <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Do you use the library for fun?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/>▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>4. What do you usually do if you are having trouble finding a book or information?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ask the librarian <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Browse the shelves until I find something useful <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Check the library catalogue/computer <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Give up <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>5. Where do you get most of the books you read?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ School library <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Public Library <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Parents bought them for me <input type="checkbox"/>▪ I buy them <input type="checkbox"/>▪ I choose them with my parents <input type="checkbox"/> 

(B) Reading Habits:

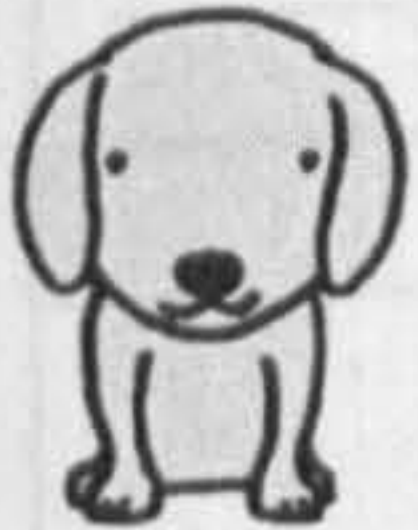
<p>6. How often do you borrow books from the school library to read in your spare time / at home?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Every day <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Every week <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Every month <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Once a term <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Once a year <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Never <input type="checkbox"/>▪ Cannot remember <input type="checkbox"/>
---	---

<p>7. What type of books do you enjoy reading in your spare time?</p> 	<p>Fiction :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-fiction ▪ Poetry ▪ All 
<p>Fiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Horror ● Thrillers ● Detective ● Adventures / fantasy ● Romance ● Science-fiction ● Classics ● Family / friendships ● Others: _____ _____ _____ 	<p>Non-Fiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animals <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Art <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ General science <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Geography <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Food <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ History <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>(C) The Library and Services Available:</p>	
<p>8. Do you use the library to study / do your homework / coursework in?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Always <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Not very often <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Never <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>9. How would you describe the library?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very important for helping me with my school work <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ A place I want to get out of as soon as possible <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ A quiet place where I can concentrate and do my work <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ A place where I can relax and read <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Noisy and frantic <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>10-A. Do you enjoy library skills/literacy classes?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, we have regular lessons <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Only if you ask the librarian <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Only when you start school <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ I don't know <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>10- B. Are the library staff helpful to you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ It is OK <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>11. What type of help do you usually need from the library staff?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finding things <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Using the library catalogue <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Using the computers <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Using the online audio-books <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Using CD-ROMs <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Help with projects ▪ Others:



(D) Curriculum and The Library:

12. Do teachers ask you to use the library to help you complete homework / coursework?



- Always ☐
- Most of the time ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Not very often ☐
- Never ☐

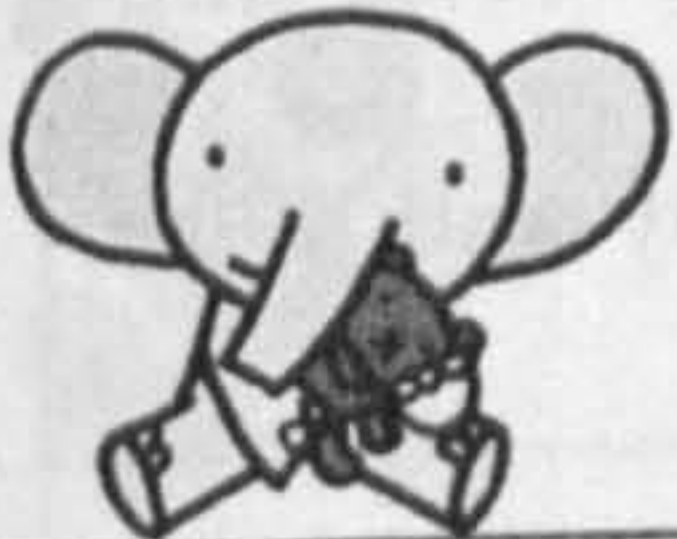


13. Can you find useful information to help you with school work?



- Always ☐
- Most of the time ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Not very often ☐
- Never ☐

14. Is the information that you find in the library generally:



- Too easy? ☐
- Too difficult? ☐
- About the right level? ☐
- Mixture ☐

15. Do you use the library computer catalogue to find books in the library?

- Always ☐
- Most of the time ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Not very often ☐
- Never ☐

16. Do you use the library computer catalogue without help?



- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Don't know ☐

(E) Online Audio-Books (Naxos Spoken Word Library):


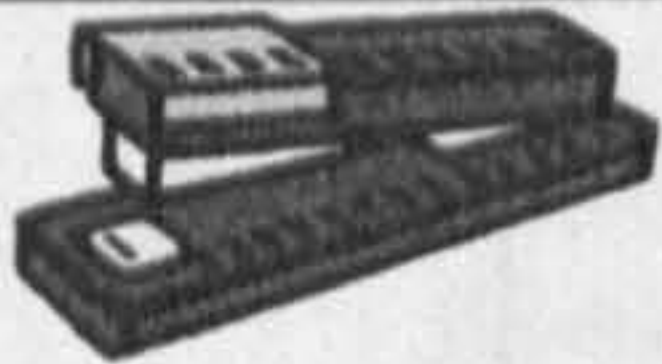


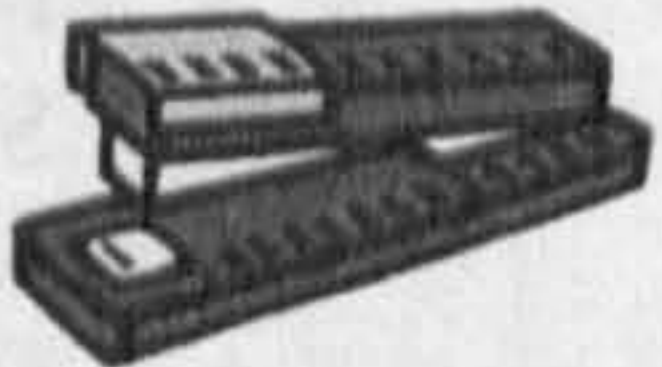


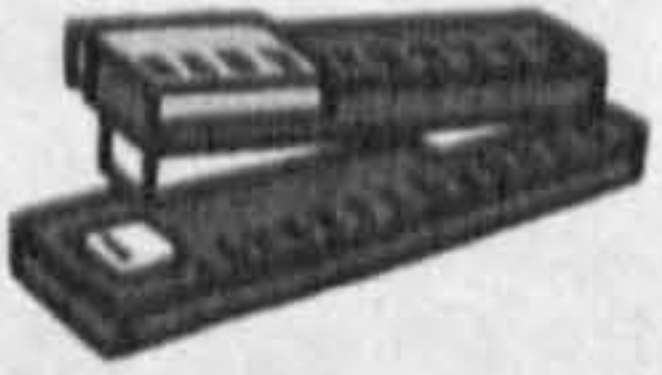

17. Do you use the online audio-books on the Naxos Spoken Word Library in the Library?





- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Sometimes ☐

18. Do you use the Naxos Spoken Word Library at home?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Sometimes ☐

	
<p>19. Do you enjoy listening to the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> in your Free-Time?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ WHY?: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>20. Do you think the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> is easy to use?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy and interesting <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Easy but boring <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ About the right level <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> 
<p>21. When you have found a book in the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>, what do you do?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read and listen to the whole audio-book <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Read and listen to the whole book, but par-by-part over a few sessions <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Read and listen to the whole book and make notes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Read and listen to the title only and print it out <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Others: <hr/>
<p>22. Do you find the texts on the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> more interesting and easier to follow than other printed-books?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, it is interesting and easy to follow <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No, it is NOT interested and NOT easy to follow <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Please state reasons, why? <hr/> 
<p>23. In the Library, is there always a free computer when you want to use <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Always <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Not very often <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Never <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>24. Do you rely on your parents or teachers to choose what books to listen to from the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> 

<p>25. Do you prefer to choose your own books to listen to from the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes
<p>26. Do the background music and sound effects in <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> match the moods of the stories and poems, and do they help you better understand and enjoy the stories or poems?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>27. When listening to <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>, do you use the Dictionaries Online to look up words that you do not understand?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>28. Do you prefer to listen to the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> at the School Library OR at Home?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prefer at School Library <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Prefer at Home <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ At both places <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>29. Do your parents still read paper-books to you at home?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>30. Do you prefer listening to a story told by a live person than listening to the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ No <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Why? _____ _____ _____ _____
<p>31. In the last 30 days, how many audio-books from the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u> have you listened to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 – 3 <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ 4 – 6 <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ 7 – 10 <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ More than 10 <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>32. How long have you been using the <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ About 5 months <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ About 3 months <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ About 1 month <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ About 2 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ About 1 week <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Just a few days <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>33. Which is your favourite audio-book insider <u>Naxos Spoken Word Library</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please give title of your favourite audio-book: ▪ Audio-book title:

(APPENDIX 3)

Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire Comments on Students' Use of Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL):					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 = Strongly disagree ▪ 2 = Disagree ▪ 3 = Neutral ▪ 4 = Agree ▪ 5 = Strongly agree 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 = Never ▪ 2 = Rarely ▪ 3 = Sometimes ▪ 4 = Regularly ▪ 5 = Often 		
Teachers' Information					
1	What subject(s) do you teach at school?				
2	Do you incorporate the use of Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) in your teaching?				Never 1 2 3 4 5 Often
3	Do you assign homework to your students that involve the use of NSWL?				Never 1 2 3 4 5 Often
Impacts on Students					
4	NSWL has a positive impact on the students' overall learning.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
I. Reading					
5	NSWL has a positive impact on the level of student concentration during reading.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
6	NSWL creates positive attitudes towards reading among the students.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
7	The use of NSWL can help the students read the traditional printed-books texts more accurately.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
8	NSWL can facilitate students' reading progress in a way that is equivalent to one-to-one tutoring with an adult, in terms of phonological attainment.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
9	The sound effects and background music in NSWL has resulted in an improvement of the reading and listening comprehension performance of students.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
10	Listening to NSWL is a rather passive activity, and it does not engage the intellect as much reading does.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
II. Literacy Development					
11	NSWL can improve overall literacy development in children.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
12	Listening to NSWL is a good and effective way to improve students' vocabulary and usage of the English language.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
13	NSWL is an effective tool in engaging the students with literature.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
14	Using NSWL can help students develop a taste and appreciation for the classic English literature.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
15	NSWL can help students' comprehension of stories and poems.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
III. Imagination and Creativity					
16	NSWL has the potentials to increase the scope for the students to exercise their own imagination and creativity.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
17	In NSWL, reader's voice, by inflection, accent, or pace, will take away the student's/listener's independence in creating mental images.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
IV. Leisure					
18	NSWL is an effective educational tool to motivate the students/children to read more books for leisure.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
19	NSWL has enhanced your students' book access at home.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
20	NSWL is a healthy change from television for students during their free time.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree
21	NSWL or other audio-books are merely entertainment and a waste of time.				Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

Students' Behaviours and Preferences					
22	Students find using NSWL entertaining as well as educational.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
23	Do your students go to the school library and use NSWL voluntarily for leisure?	Never 1 2 3 4 5	Often		
24	Students use NSWL individually, not in groups.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
25	Based on your observations, students enjoy using NSWL at school.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
26	Provided that both versions (paper-book and electronic/NSWL) of the same title are available, the students generally prefer to use the electronic version under NSWL.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
27	The students expressed frustration at having to wait their turn to use NSWL, since there are very limited computers at school.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
28	The audio-books (<i>under Children's Classics and Junior Classic Fiction Sections</i>) inside NSWL are narrated at a rate that matches the young listeners'/students' reading rate.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
29	The initial excitements brought by NSWL will only lead the students to avoid the text and waste time " PLAYING " on the page instead.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
30	When using NSWL, students are more attracted by the sounds, music, graphics than the story or text.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
31	What kind of FICTION books do your students prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-8.	Horror			
		Thrillers			
		Detective			
		Adventures / fantasy			
		Romance			
		Science-fiction			
		Classics			
		Family / friendships			
32	What kind of NON-FICTION books do your students prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-6.	Animals			
		Art			
		General science			
		Geography			
		Food			
		History			
Others					
33	Electronic resources will eventually replace print materials in the school library.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
34	The school library should continue to subscribe to NSWL if budget allows.	Disagree 1 2 3 4 5	Agree		
35	Other comments on NSWL's impacts on your teaching methods/styles and students' learning?				
36	Other comments or suggestions on the overall contents of the NSWL?				

37	Other comments or suggestions on the overall design/interface of the NSWL software?
38	Other Unplanned Outcomes among the students using NSWL?

(APPENDIX 4)**Parent Questionnaire****Comments on Children's Use of Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL):**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Regularly 5 = Often 				
1	Do you incorporate the use of Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) in your children's playtime?	Never 1	2	3	4	Often 5
2	You prefer your children listening to NSWL rather than watching television during their free time at home.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
3	Electronic resources will eventually replace print materials at your home.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
Impacts on Children's Learning						
4	NSWL has a positive impact on the children's overall learning.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
I. Reading						
5	NSWL has a positive impact on the level of children's concentrations during reading.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
6	NSWL creates positive attitudes towards reading among the children.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
7	The use of NSWL can help the children to read the traditional printed-books texts more accurately.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
8	NSWL can facilitate children's reading progress in a way that is equivalent to one-to-one tutoring with an adult, in terms of phonological attainment.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
9	The sound effects and background music in NSWL has resulted in an improvement of the reading and listening comprehension performance of children.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
10	Listening to NSWL is a rather passive activity, and it does not engage the intellect as much reading does.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
II. Literacy Development						
11	NSWL can improve overall literacy development in children.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
12	Listening to NSWL is a good and effective way to improve children's vocabulary and usage of the English language.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
13	NSWL is an effective tool in engaging the children with literature.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
14	Using NSWL can help children developing a taste and appreciation for the classic English literature.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
15	NSWL can help children's comprehension of stories and poems.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
III. Imagination and Creativity						
16	NSWL has the potentials to increase the scope for the children to exercise their own imagination and creativity.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
17	In NSWL, reader's voice, by inflection, accent, or pace, will take away the listener's independence in creating mental images.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
IV. Leisure						
18	NSWL is an effective educational tool to motivate the children/children to read more books for leisure.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
19	NSWL has enhanced your children's book access at home.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
20	NSWL is a healthy change from television for children during their free time.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5
21	NSWL or other audio-books are merely entertainment and a waste of time.	Disagree 1	2	3	4	Agree 5

Children's Behaviours and Preferences						
22	Children find using NSWL entertaining as well as educational.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
23	Do your children listen to NSWL voluntarily for leisure at home?	Never			Often	
		1	2	3	4	5
24	Do your children do homework that involves the use of NSWL?	Never			Often	
		1	2	3	4	5
25	Do you listen to NSWL together with your children at home?	Never			Often	
		1	2	3	4	5
26	Do your children listen to NSWL together with their brothers and sisters at home?	Never			Often	
		1	2	3	4	5
27	Based on your observations, children enjoy using NSWL at home.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
28	Provided that both versions (paper-book and electronic/NSWL) of the same title are available, the children generally prefer to use the electronic version under NSWL.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
29	The audio-books (<i>under Children's Classics and Junior Classic Fiction Sections</i>) inside NSWL are narrated at a rate that matches the young listeners'/children's reading rate.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
30	The initial excitements brought by NSWL will only lead the children to avoid the text and waste time " PLAYING " on the page instead.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
31	When using NSWL, children are more attracted by the sounds, music, and graphics than the story or text.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
32	What kind of FICTION books do your children prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-8.	Horror <input type="checkbox"/> Thrillers <input type="checkbox"/> Detective <input type="checkbox"/> Adventures / fantasy <input type="checkbox"/> Romance <input type="checkbox"/> Science-fiction <input type="checkbox"/> Classics <input type="checkbox"/> Family / friendships <input type="checkbox"/>				
33	What kind of NON-FICTION books do your children prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-6.	Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> General science <input type="checkbox"/> Geography <input type="checkbox"/> Food <input type="checkbox"/> History <input type="checkbox"/>				
34	How much time do your children spend on listening to NSWL at home each	Less than 1 hour <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour <input type="checkbox"/> 2 hours <input type="checkbox"/> 3 hours <input type="checkbox"/> Above 3 hours <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/>				
Others						
35	The school library should continue to subscribe to NSWL if budget allows.	Disagree			Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
36	Other comments on NSWL's impacts on your children's learning and reading skills?					

37	Other comments or suggestions on the overall contents of the NSWL?
38	Other comments or suggestions on the overall design/interface of the NSWL software?

(APPENDIX 5)

Responses from Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire on NSWL

Teacher/Librarian Questionnaire on NSWL (n=6)					
What subject(s) do you teach at school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Library lessons (3)English language (3)				
1. Do you incorporate the use of NSWL in your teaching?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
2. Do you assign homework to your students that involve the use of NSWL?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%
Impacts on Children					
3. NSWL has a positive impact on the students' overall learning.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	17%	83%	0%	0%
I. Reading					
4. NSWL has a positive impact on level of student concentration during reading.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	17%	33%	50%	0%
5. NSWL creates positive attitudes towards reading among students.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	17%	83%	0%
6. Use of NSWL can help students read traditional printed books texts more accurately	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	75%	0%	25%
7. NSWL can facilitate students' reading progress in a way that is equivalent to one-to-one tutoring with an adult, in terms of phonological attainment.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	67%	17%	17%	0%
8. Sound effects and background music in NSWL has resulted in improvement of reading and listening comprehension performance of students.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%
9. Listening to NSWL is a rather passive activity, and it does not engage intellect as much reading does.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	33%	33%	17%	17%

II. Literacy Development					
10. NSWL can improve overall literacy development in children.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	17%	33%	33%	17%
11. Listening to NSWL is a good and effective way to improve students' vocabulary and usage of English.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	17%	83%	0%
12. NSWL is an effective tool in engaging students with literature.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
13. Using NSWL can help students develop a taste and appreciation for classic English literature.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	33%	67%	0%
12. NSWL can help students' comprehension of stories and poems.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	17%	67%	17%
III. Imagination and Creativity					
13. NSWL has potentials to increase scope for students to exercise their own imagination and creativity.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	33%	50%	0%	17%
14. In NSWL, reader's voice, by inflection, accent, or pace, will take away student's /listener's independence in creating mental images.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	83%	17%	0%
IV. Leisure					
15. NSWL is an effective educational tool to motivate the students/children to read more books for leisure.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	33%	17%	50%
16. NSWL has enhanced your students' book access at home	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	33%	0%	50%	17%
17. NSWL is a healthy change from television for students during their free time.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	33%	17%	33%	17%
18. NSWL or other audio-books are merely entertainment and a waste of time.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%

V. Students' Behaviours and Preferences								
19. Students find using NSWL entertaining as well as educational.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	0%	0%	50%	33%	17%			
20. Do your students go to school library and use NSWL voluntarily for leisure?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often			
	17%	0%	50%	33%	0%			
21. Students use NSWL individually, not in groups.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%			
22. Based on your observations, students enjoy using NSWL at school.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	17%	0%	50%	33%	0%			
23. Provided that both versions (paper-book and electronic/NSWL) of same title are available, students generally prefer to use electronic version under NSWL.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	17%	50%	0%	33%	0%			
24. Students expressed frustration at having to wait their turn to use NSWL, since there are very limited computers at school.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	17%	33%	0%	33%	17%			
25. Audio-books (under Children's Classics and Junior Classic Fiction Sections) inside NSWL are narrated at a rate that matches the young listeners'/students' reading rate.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	33%	33%	17%	0%	17%			
26. Initial excitements brought by NSWL will only lead students to avoid text and waste time "PLAYING" on page instead.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	17%	33%	50%	0%	0%			
27. When using NSWL, students are more attracted by the sounds, music, graphics than the story or text.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree			
	17%	33%	0%	50%	0%			
28. What kind of FICTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

books do your students prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-8.	Adventure/ fantasy	Horror	Thrillers	Family/ friendships	Romance	Detective	Science- fiction	Classics
--	-----------------------	--------	-----------	------------------------	---------	-----------	---------------------	----------

29. What kind of NON-FICTION books do your students prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	Animal s	Art	History	Food	General science	Geography	
30. Electronic resources will eventually replace print materials in the school library	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
	60%	0%	0%	40%	0%		
School library should continue to subscribe to NSWL if budget allows	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%		
VI. Others							
Other comments on NSWL's impacts on your teaching methods/styles and students' learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>It is better to have individual username and password, and they can see their ranking among the class etc. because it will be more exciting for them.</i><i>My students prefer to have personal account to log into the NSWL and have competition with other classmates etc.</i>						
Other comments or suggestions on overall contents of NSWL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>It would be good for the NSWL to include more contemporary material, rather than restricted to out-of-copyright works. Would prefer to be able to subscribe just to children's content – much of the material is too advanced for primary schools.</i><i>Some of my students who have tried to use NSWL told me that they don't like it because it is boring and they can't find the topics that they really interested in.</i>						
Other comments or suggestions on overall design / interface of NSWL software?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Again relating to customization of the NSWL – would prefer to have a more child-friendly interface. The site is otherwise fairly easy to use.</i>						
Other unplanned outcomes among students using NSWL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>NIL</i>						

(APPENDIX 6)

Responses from Parent Questionnaire on NSWL

Parent Questionnaire on NSWL (n=6)					
1. Do you incorporate the use of NSWL in your children's playtime?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	0%	20%	20%	40%	0%
2. You prefer your children listening to NSWL rather than watching television during their free time at home.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
3. Electronic resources will eventually replace print materials at your home.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	20%	20%	0%	60%	0%
Impacts on Children					
4. NSWL has a positive impact on the children's overall learning.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%
I. Reading					
5. NSWL has a positive impact on the level of children's concentrations during reading.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
6. NSWL creates positive attitudes towards reading among the children.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
7. Use of NSWL can help the children to read the traditional printed books texts more accurately.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%
8. NSWL can facilitate children's reading progress in a way that is equivalent to one-to-one tutoring with an adult, in terms of phonological attainment.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%
9. Sound effects and background	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

music in NSWL has resulted in an improvement of the reading and listening comprehension performance of children.	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%
10. Listening to NSWL is a rather passive activity, and it does not engage the intellect as much reading does.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%
II. Literacy Development					
11. NSWL can improve overall literacy development in children.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
12. Listening to NSWL is a good and effective way to improve children's vocabulary and usage of the English language.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%
13. NSWL is an effective tool in engaging the children with literature.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
14. Using NSWL can help children developing a taste and appreciation for classic English literature.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
15. NSWL can help children's comprehension of stories and poems.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
III. Imagination and Creativity					
16. NSWL has the potentials to increase the scope for children to exercise their own imagination and creativity.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%
17. In NSWL, reader's voice, by inflection, accent, or pace, will take away the listener's independence in creating mental images.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%
IV. Leisure					
18. NSWL is an effective	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

educational tool to motivate children/children to read more books for leisure.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
19. NSWL has enhanced your children's book access at home.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
20. NSWL is a healthy change from television for children during their free time.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%
21. NSWL or other audio-books are merely entertainment and a waste of time.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	20%	0%	60%	20%	0%
V. Children's Reading Behaviours and Preferences					
22. Children find using NSWL entertaining as well as educational.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%
23. Do your children listen to NSWL voluntarily for leisure at home?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	25%	0%	0%	75%	0%
24. Do your children do homework that involves the use of NSWL?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	20%	0%	80%	0%	0%
25. Do you listen to NSWL together with your children at home?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	20%	40%	40%	0%	0%
26. Do your children listen to NSWL together with their brothers and sisters at home?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
27. Based on your observations, children enjoy using NSWL at home.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	40%	20%	40%	0%
28. Provided that both versions (paper-book and electronic/NSWL) of the same title are available, children generally prefer to use electronic version under NSWL.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	20%	40%	40%	0%
29. Audio-books (under Children's Classics and Junior Classic Fiction Sections) inside NSWL are narrated at a rate that matches young listeners'/children's reading rate.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%

30. Initial excitements brought by NSWL will only lead the children to avoid the text and waste time "PLAYING" on the page instead.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
	0%	20%	0%	80%	0%		
31. When using NSWL, children are more attracted by the sounds, music and graphics than the story or text.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%		
32. What kind of FICTION books do your children prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-8.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Horror	Adventure/fantasy	Detective	Family/friendships	Classics	Romance	Thrillers
33. What kind of NON-FICTION books do your children prefer most? Please show/rank your preference with 1-6.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	General science	Animals	Art	Geography	History	Food	
34. How much time do your children spend on listening to NSWL at home each?	Less than 1 hour	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	Above 3 hours	Not sure	
	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%	0%	
VI. Others							
35. School library should continue to subscribe to NSWL if budget allows.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not sure	
	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%	
36. Other comments on NSWL's impacts on your children's learning and reading skills?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">My child finds NSWL too difficult to understand.						
37. Other comments or suggestions on the overall contents of NSWL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">My child would like to read more short stories.						
38. Other comments or suggestions on overall design/interface of the NSWL software?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">My child finds the overall design/interface of the NSWL software too complicated.						

(APPENDIX 7) - Part A

PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY
COMPLETE RESULTS FROM SECTIONS A TO E

Changes in Students' Library usage and Reading Practices –
Pre- and Post-NSWL Comparison
Question items 1 to 16

(A) General Information			
1.	Gender	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Girl	44.9	45.4
	Boy	55.1	54.6
2.	How often do you visit the school library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Every day	19.0	8.6
	Every week	67.1	69.8
	Every month	4.2	7.5
	Once a term	0.7	3.9
	Once a year	0.3	0.4
	Never	0.7	0.0
	Cannot remember	8.0	9.8
3.	Do you use the library for fun?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Yes	50.9	48.6
	No	49.1	51.4
4.	What do you usually do if you are having trouble finding a book or information?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Ask the librarian	46.8	31.3
	Browse the shelves until I find something useful	14.7	12.5
	Check the library catalogue/computer	36.0	34.6
	Give up	2.4	2.4
	Ask a friend ²⁷⁴	0.0	19.1
5.	Where do you get most of the books you read?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	School library	50.9	34.1
	Public library	8.1	14.1
	Parents bought them for me	40.4	22.8
	I buy them	0.3	13.5
	I choose them with my parents	0.3	15.5

²⁷⁴ Ask a Friend – newly added category on Post-Questionnaire.

(B) Reading Habits/Practices

6.	How often do you borrow books from the school library to read in your spare time/at home?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Every day	21.5	10.9
	Every week	60.2	56.8
	Every month	7.7	11.3
	Once a term	0.7	2.7
	Once a year	0.4	0.0
	Never	0.7	3.5
	Cannot remember	8.8	14.8
7.	What type of books do you enjoy reading in your spare time?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Fiction	52.5	54.5
	Non-fiction	44.5	38.7
	Poetry	3.0	6.9
	• Fiction:	Pre-Questionnaire	Post-Questionnaire
	Horror	12.5	13.8
	Thrillers	10.0	11.5
	Detective	13.4	15.9
	Adventures/fantasy	27.5	26.9
	Romance	3.3	2.0
	Science-fiction	7.1	7.5
	Classics	5.4	7.1
	Family/friendships	13.6	12.1
	Others	7.1	3.1
	• Non-fiction:	Pre-Questionnaire	Post-Questionnaire
	Animals	34.6	29.7
	Art	17.7	14.8
	General science	13.2	15.7
	Geography	5.7	7.6
	Food	8.0	7.0
	History	20.9	25.3

(C) The Library & Services Available

8.	Do you use the library to study/do your homework/coursework in?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Always	2.5	2.7
	Most of the time	15.4	7.4
	Sometimes	40.0	34.8
	Not very often	28.1	38.3
	Never	14.0	16.8
9.	How would you describe the library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Very important for helping me with my school work	14.3	13.6
	A quiet place where I can concentrate and do my work	24.8	31.9
	A place where I can relax and read	57.4	49.6
	Noisy and frantic	2.3	1.7
	A place I want to get out of as soon as possible	1.2	3.2
10-A.	Do you enjoy library skills/literacy classes?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Yes, we have regular lessons	59.7	51.2
	No	9.2	16.0
	Only when you start school	3.7	2.3
	I don't know	27.5	30.5
10-B.	Are the library staff helpful to you?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Yes	82.8	65.8
	No	9.1	2.7
	It is OK	8.0	31.5
11.	What type of help do you usually need from the library staff?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
	Finding things	56.8	54.8
	Using the library catalogue	6.1	4.6
	Using the computers	13.6	13.6
	Using the online audio-books	4.1	2.7
	Using CD-ROMs	6.4	7.6
	Help with projects	9.3	12.0
	Others	3.8	4.6

(D) Curriculum & The Library

12.	Do teachers ask you to use the library to help you complete homework/coursework?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
		0.4	1.6
		5.5	6.2
		33.2	34.6
		35.4	39.3
		25.5	18.3
13.	Can you find useful information to help you with school work?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
		11.4	12.1
		33.7	31.6
		34.8	42.2
		13.2	10.9
		7.0	3.1
14.	Is the information that you find in the library generally:	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
		5.6	8.3
		4.1	1.2
		50.0	40.5
		40.4	50.0
15.	Do you use the library computer catalogue to find books in the library?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
		7.0	10.8
		25.6	22.8
		29.3	32.0
		24.2	20.8
		13.9	13.5
16.	Do you use the library computer catalogue without help?	Pre-Questionnaire (n=292)	Post-Questionnaire (n=260)
		%	%
		18.4	40.7
		20.2	21.2
		37.5	15.7
		13.2	8.9
		10.7	13.6

(APPENDIX 7) - Part B

**STUDENT-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY
COMPLETE RESULTS FROM SECTION (E)
ONLINE AUDIO-BOOKS (NAXOS SPOKEN WORD LIBRARY)**

Details on complete answers to all check-box and open-ended questions collected from the student Post-Questionnaires, **Section E Online Audio-Books (Naxos Spoken Word Library)**, question items 17 to 33 are as follows:

17. Do you use NSWL in school library? (n=136)	
	%
• No	76.1
• Sometimes	17.3
• Yes	6.7
• Total	100.0

18. Do you use NSWL at Home (n=136)	
	%
• No	70.6
• Sometimes	19.2
• Yes	10.2
• Total	100.0

19 - Part A. Do you enjoy listening to NSWL in your free time? (n=136)	
	%
• No	29.5
• Sometimes	37.2
• Yes	33.3
• Total	100.0

Reasons on why students enjoyed and not enjoyed using are as follow (based directly on answers given students recorded on Post-Questionnaire):

19 – Part B. Why do you enjoy (or not enjoy) using NSWL?	
Reasons for enjoying NSWL (Advantages)	
<i>Easy Access ; Listening Rather than Reading</i>	
• Because I don't have to buy the book. ²⁷⁵	1 ²⁷⁶
• Because I don't have to read to myself, just to feel relaxed.	1
• Because I like listening and reading stories.	3
• Because I like listening to stories.	
• Because in NSWL, most of the stories these are quite interesting to read.	2
• Because it's interesting.	
• You can read books in the computer.	1
• Because it can make me relax and concentrate on my school projects.	1
• When I don't have anything to do, it's nice to read and listen a book on the computer.	1
• Because it reads for you and sometimes when you don't know the words they read it for you.	4
• Because it will read the book for you.	
• Because it is nice to hear the stories being read to you.	
• I like it because I only have to listen instead of really read.	
<i>NSWL Being Interesting</i>	
• Because it really nice.	1
• Because it has fun interesting books.	1
• Because it is good.	1
• Because it is very entertaining and a good way to spend lunch time.	1
• Because it is fun and it is easy to go on. Also it is useful for my English.	3
• Because it is fun.	
• Because it is interesting and fun.	
• Because it is very interesting and exciting to listen.	1
• It's interesting.	1
• So I can join the (reading) competition and listen to story.	1
<i>Effective Learning Tool</i>	
• Because sometimes I can learn more words.	1
• Because they read with expressions.	1
• Because you can listen and read at the same time.	1
• I like listening to stories because it makes me relating.	1
• Because it helped me read <i>Wind in the Willows</i> .	1
• Because it helps me with my literacy.	1
• Because it is helpful.	1
• Total	31

²⁷⁵ Statements made by student respondents collected from Post-Questionnaire survey.

²⁷⁶ Total number of respondents making this statement.

Reasons for NOT enjoying NSWL (Disadvantages)	
<i>NSWL Being Boring</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has no photos and is boring. Because I think it is so boring. Because it is boring. Because it's boring. Because it's stupid and boring. Because sometimes is so boring. Because sometimes I think the book that they are doing are boring. Boring. It gets me a teeny bit bored. Sometimes it's a bit boring. 	10
<i>NSWL Being too Easy and Simply Don't Use it</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I did not had time. Because I always have works to do so I don't have any free time. Because I'm so busy. 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I don't feel good. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I don't know what it is. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I don't listen to Naxos. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I don't use it. Because I never do it. I have never used it. I never use it, so I don't know. 	4
<i>Books and Games are Better</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because I like reading books instead. Because I normally read books. I sometimes like to read books myself. It's boring prefer reading. 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because sometimes I will play board games. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the quality is poor. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because they read very slowly. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because we only have classical books on it. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I always love to sit and play games with my sister Valerie. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I prefer to read. 	1
<i>Other Reasons</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is nothing. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not convenient. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some are good and some I don't like it. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too easy. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well, because I don't like using it sometimes, because it sometimes I want to read it by myself. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total 	35

20. Do you think NSWL is easy to use? (NSWL User-Friendliness) (n=136)	
	%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About the right level 	25.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't know 	18.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy and interesting 	37.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy but boring 	17.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too difficult 	0.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total 	100.0

21. When you find a book in NSWL, what do you do? (n=136)	
	%
• Read and listen to the title only and print it out.	3.4
• Read and listen to the whole audio-book.	24.8
• Read and listen to the whole book and make notes.	4.3
• Read and listen to the whole book, but part-by-part over a few sessions.	54.7
Others	
• Others: I don't use it.	0.9
• Others: Don't even go on it!	0.9
• Others: Go to sleep.	0.9
• Others: I never look for books.	0.9
• Others: If it is boring I stop, exciting go on.	0.9
• Others: I've never enter the NSWL.	0.9
• Others: Just listen.	0.9
• Others: Listen apart only.	0.9
• Others: Listen for 20 mins.	0.9
• Others: Listen to part of the book.	0.9
• Others: Listen to the first part and see if I like it.	0.9
• Others: Read a little bit if it is too boring.	0.9
• Others: Read about half hour.	0.9
• Others: Read by myself, don't listen.	0.9
• Others: Read first page then decide.	0.9
• Total	100.0

22 – Part A. Do you find text under NSWL more interesting and easier to follow than other paper-books? (n=136)	
	%
• No, NSWL is NOT interesting and NOT easy to follow	16.2
• Sometimes	47.9
• Yes, it is interesting and easy to follow	35.9
• Total	100.0

22 – Part B. reasons why students like and dislike NSWL (n=136)	
Reasons why NSWL better than printed-books (NSWL Advantages)	
• Because the writing is the right size for me to read. ²⁷⁷	1 ²⁷⁸
• Because when I hear someone reading, it is quite easy to follow.	1
• Because you are listening to it at the same time.	1
• Because it is fun.	1
• Because it is fun to read to yourself as if somebody reading to you.	1
• Because it reads the words to you.	1
• Because when I read books I always lose which line I read.	1
• Because it's large (<i>maybe referring to size of words onscreen</i>) and clear.	1
• Because one can read along.	1
• Because you don't need to read it.	2
• Because it helps you with the words you don't know how to pronounce.	1
• Is OK and it is easy to follow.	1
• Because sometimes I want to read the book myself but NSWL is useful if I can't find the books and get tired of reading.	1
• Books are easy, so are N.S.W.L.	1
• Because the words are bigger.	1
• Because the words are quite big.	1
• It uses right level words.	1
• It's more fun.	1
• Sometimes the online text tells what to do so it's easier.	1
• Total	20
Reasons why students think printed-books better than NSWL (NSWL Disadvantages)	
• I can't use it at home because I have a Mac without WMP.	1
• Because I don't even like reading Naxos Spoken Word Library.	1
• Because if I read too much on the computer I get headaches.	1
• Because it is not interesting.	1
• Because it's a bit boring.	1
• Because nothing is special about it.	1
• Because online text is too bright to read.	1
• Because sometimes they read too fast.	1
• It is so boring.	3
• Yes but a bit boring.	
• It sometimes gets boring.	
• It's hard and easy.	1
• It's not fun.	1
• It's not interesting.	1
• No, because I read faster than they speak.	1
• Not convenient.	1
• Not very convenient.	1
• Poor quality.	1
• Sometimes my eyes focus on the words and skip ahead sometimes.	1
• The font is not too small so I don't have to squint my eyes.	1
• Total	20

²⁷⁷ Comments from respondents collected from Post-Questionnaire.

²⁷⁸ Number of respondents making this statement.

23. In the library, is there always a free computer when you want to use NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
• Always	14.0
• Most of the time	22.5
• Never	16.3
• Not very often	29.5
• Sometimes	17.8
• Total	100

24. Do you rely on your parents or teachers to choose what books to listen to from NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
• No	64.6
• Sometimes	31.5
• Yes	3.8
• Total	100

25. Do you prefer to choose your own books from NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
• No	17.7
• Sometimes	16.9
• Yes	65.4
• Total	100

26. Do background music and sound effects in NSWL help you better understand and enjoy the stories or poems? (n=136)	
	%
• No	23.4
• Sometimes	50.0
• Yes	26.6
• Total	100

26. When listening to NSWL, do you use the dictionaries online to look up words that you do not understand? (n=136)	
	%
• No	61.6
• Sometimes	31.2
• Yes	7.2
• Total	100

27. Do you prefer to listen to NSWL at the school library or at home? (n=136)	
	%
• Prefer at School Library	34.5
• Prefer at Home	43.4
• At both places	22.1
• Total	100.0

29. Do your parents still read paper-books to you at home? (n=136)	
	%
• No	63.3
• Sometimes	27.5
• Yes	9.2
• Total	100.0

30 – Part A. Live person versus NSWL – Do you preferred stories be told be lived person than NSWL? (n=136)	
	%
• No	25.0
• Sometimes	24.2
• Yes	50.8
• Total	100.0

30 – Part B. Reasons why students preferred stories be told by live person than NSWL?	
• 41 respondents provided reasons why they preferred to stories told by a liver person:	1
• Because I love reading my own books.	1
• Because I think it's more exciting.	1
• Because I will have more imagination.	1
• Because is more interesting.	1
• Because it has more feelings than the NSWL.	1
• Because it is not fun.	1
• Because it makes it real life if a live person reads to me.	1
• Because it's better.	1
• Because it's clearer.	1
• Because it's easier.	1
• Because its fun.	1
• Because my mom reads it.	1
• Because sometimes they make mistakes.	2
• Because the voice is different sometimes you understand better.	1
• Because there are word.	1
• Because they are both nice.	1
• Because they can make natural mistakes.	1
• Because you can ask questions	1
• Better quality.	1
• Boring.	2
• Both are same excerpt music.	1
• Easier to understand.	1
• I like it.	1
• I think I will understand more.	1
• I'd already know it.	1
• It makes me feel excited when a live person tells the story.	1
• It's because I like listening to new stories than an old story.	1
• It's better.	1
• Maybe the person on the word library has not much expression.	1
• More interesting, a live person has/can see (more) expressions ; Because you can see their expressions	5
• Prefer to read.	1
• Sometimes I don't want to really stare at the computer, I normally prefer someone reading to me.	1
• They can tell me what the words mean.	1
• You can tell them to repeat a sentence without dragging the arrow back.	1
• You feel more social.	1

31. Total # of NSWL titles listened within last 30 Days (n=136)	
	%
• 1-3 titles	72.2
• 4-6 titles	13.9
• 7-10 titles	5.6
• More than 10 titles	8.3
• Total	100.0

32. How long have you been a NSWL user? (n=136)	
	%
• About 1 month	16.2
• About 1 week	4.3
• About 2 weeks	4.3
• About 3 months	27.4
• About 5 months	16.2
• Just a few days	31.6
• Total	100.0

33. Which is your favourite audio-book inside NSWL?				
	NSWL audio-book titles chosen by students	Boys ²⁷⁹	Girls ²⁸⁰	Total
▪	<i>1,000 Years of Laughter</i>	2	1	3
▪	<i>Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There</i>	0	2	2
▪	<i>Ballet Stories</i>	0	2	2
▪	<i>Dog and the shadow</i>	2	1	3
▪	<i>The Emperor's New Clothes</i>	1	1	2
▪	<i>Great Explorers</i>	1	1	2
▪	<i>Heidi</i>	0	2	2
▪	<i>History of World Cup</i>	2	0	2
▪	<i>Jason and Argonauts</i>	2	1	3
▪	<i>Little Women</i>	0	4	4
▪	<i>The Little Red Riding Hood</i>	0	2	2
▪	<i>Martin Luther King</i>	1	0	1
▪	<i>Peter and the Wolf</i>	2	2	4
▪	<i>Peter Pan</i>	2	2	4
▪	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	0	1	1
▪	<i>The Secret Garden</i>	6	6	12
▪	<i>Sherlock Holmes</i>	2	2	4
▪	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>	0	3	3
▪	<i>The Swan Lake</i>	0	4	4
▪	<i>Thumbelina and Other Fairy Tales</i>	0	3	3
▪	<i>Wind in the Willows</i>	1	2	3
	TOTAL:	25	43	68

²⁷⁹ Boys' votes: NSWL title votes by total number of boys.

²⁸⁰ Girls' votes: NSWL titles votes by total number of girls.

(APPENDIX 8)

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Focus Group Interview I: Bradbury School

- **Date:** Thursday, 19th April 2007
- **Time:** 13:30 – 14:00
- **Place:** Library, Bradbury Elementary School
- **Present/Facilitator:** Mr. Christopher Chan (School Librarian)
- **No. of Students at Focus Group:** 4

Individual Student Participants' Profiles:			
Name:	Age:	Gender:	Students' Profiles:
Cherie	10	Girl	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL High User.▪ 5th-grade student.▪ Winner of the 2nd NSWL Reading held at Bradbury School.▪ More verbal and most eloquent (compared with the other 3 participants)▪ Avid reader.
Colin	10	Boy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL High User.▪ 5th-grade student.▪ Winner of the 2nd NSWL Reading held at Bradbury School.▪ Very quiet and less verbal. Only express opinions when asked.▪ Avid reader.
Eric	11	Boy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL low user.▪ 5th-grade student.▪ Had been introduced to NSWL during library class at beginning of term, but had forgotten all about it since.▪ Interest in reading (uncertain), but claims to like cookery books.
Yuya	11	Boy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL low user.▪ 5th-grade student.▪ Also had been introduced to NSWL during library class at beginning of term, but had forgotten about it.▪ Verbal in playful, boyish manner, with graphic imaginations (<i>perhaps related to his interests in comic books</i>)▪ Enjoys comic books.
Notes: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Before the student focus group interview actually began, both Eric and Yuya were led by the Bradbury School Librarian to have a quick try (approx. 10 min.) of the NSWL in the School Library, and then they were both invited to join the group.2. All participants do not have their own computers at home.			

(Actual Focus Group Interview)

Researcher:

- ***What do you all think of the Naxos Spoken Word Library?***

Colin:

- I have been using it (NSWL) for two months. It is quite good, because you don't really have to find anything (*referring to finding books from bookshelf*). You get the text as well as the audio. I like to read it at home before I go to bed.
- The book that was selected for the *NSWL Reading Competition*, I read it two times.
- After started using Naxos, I still sometimes borrow books from the school library, but I don't go to public library. I like everything about it (NSWL).

Eric:

- (*although after a brief try*) I like it very much. It is not boring. It is easy to read and I can follow it easily. The words are very clear. The person reading the book is very loud and clear. Yes, there are also the sounds and the music. They help you think that the character is really doing it, the sounds make it more real. They help you imagine the characters and the stories. I don't have to read the words, I can just listen.

Eric:

- I like the story, because at the end of the story, there is a short sentence, it teaches you a lesson. (*student referring to Aesop's Fables from NSWL*)

Yuya:

- Yes, I could hear the dog barking when I listened to *The Dog and the Shadow*.

Yuya:

- The (*reading*) speed is also OK. The music in the background also relaxes you. It calms you down and helps you imagine.

Eric and Yuya:

- She is quite good, (*referring to the reader*), sometimes she does different voices too, sometimes very high, sometimes very low....also different accents too...very interesting.

Researcher:

- ***What do you want to be when you grow up? (Researcher wanted to know whether students' interests and dreams in life were in fact related to their habits and interests in reading).***

Cherie:

- I want to become a teacher when I grow up, because it is easy, and I get to use the whiteboard. You also get all the long holidays - all the school and summer holidays, and I can take my children to holidays with me. You also get this very comfortable sofa in the staff room, and for parties, you get all these wriggly jelly stuff and the worm-like gummy stuff. (*Cherie referring to the leftover from the teachers' parties*).

Yuya:

- I want to become a policeman, because I can get a gun!

Eric:

- I don't know. (*after a short pause*) Maybe I want to become a cook or a chef. I want to cook French food.

Colin:

- I want to become an author. I want to write mystery and adventure books. (*Colin was more interested in what the Researcher was writing down on the notepad, rather than paying attention to the Researcher's questions or engaging in the discussions with his peer.*)

Researcher:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do your parents still read to you at home?</i>
<p>Colin, Eric and Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No they don't. They are too busy. But I turn to Naxos for storytelling. <p>Cherie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, my mother still reads to me at home. But when she gets too busy, I can listen to Naxos by myself, and I don't have to rely on my mother. Usually, my mother offers to read to me.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you prefer to listen to NSWL at home or at school?</i>
<p>Colin, Eric, Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I don't listen to it at school. <p>Eric and Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I prefer to listen to it at home, because I feel more relaxed. You also get longer time with the computer. <p>Colin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I don't usually listen to it on Saturdays or Sunday. Usually, from Mondays to Fridays. I prefer to listen to it at nighttime before I go to bed, because it helps you go to sleep. <p>Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, I also prefer at nighttime before I sleep, because I usually get sleepy, and it makes you sleepier. <p>Eric:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I also prefer to listen to it at home, only after school, not before I sleep. Because before I go to bed, I get too tired. <p>Eric and Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like to do it at home too, because I don't have enough time to listen to the whole book at school. <p>Cherie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I think they should have it on CDs. Because I cannot sleep if I leave the computer on in my room at night. The monitor is too bright. I listen to it on weekends sometimes when my mother has stopped checking her emails. (<i>Cherie and her mother share the same computer at home.</i>) I think sometimes the reader is a bit funny and difficult to understand, I mean the way they pronounce certain words. I think they should have more famous books like <i>Harry Potter</i>. The books from Naxos are usually very old.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Would you still prefer to watch TV or listen to NSWL during your free time?</i>
<p>Eric:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I would listen to NSWL during free time, but I would like to watch TV. Maybe if I have time, I will go on the internet at home and listen to a few stories.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>We noticed that there were children using NSWL on Christmas holiday, were you the ones reading it on Christmas? Why do you think they were listening to NSWL instead of playing?</i>

Cherie:

- I don't remember if I had used it on Christmas or not.

Colin, Eric and Colin:

- I wasn't!

Yuya:

- Maybe there are more stories about the Santa Claus.

Eric:

- Maybe they were looking for cooking things, like how to cook and stuff from Naxos.

Eric:

- If I wanted to look for receipts, I would prefer a real book, because if I leave the computer on for too long, I will need to move the mouse to turn off the screensaver, and I don't want to damage the computer with my greasy, dirty hands. *(Eric was thinking if a person is reading a cookbook, he/she must be actually cooking concurrently.)*

Eric and Yuya:

- Maybe they were using it after Christmas dinner.

Researcher:

- *What kinds of books do you enjoy reading?*

Cherie:

- I like to read anything that is not scary, and anything that is not babyish.

Colin:

- I like to read adventure books, because it is more exciting. I don't like girly book like *Heidi* or *Alice in the Wonderland*.

Colin, Eric and Yuya:

- *"Those books are for girls!" "Because they are about girls doing girls' stuff."*

Researcher:

- *When you go traveling with your parents on holiday, do you usually take books with you to read, and do you think you will listen to NSWL when you are on holiday?*

Eric and Yuya:

- Yes, I can listen to it when I go on holidays, and I don't have to take any books with me. I can use my father's notebook computer.

Cherie:

- When we go traveling, by the time we go back to the hotel, it is late and we usually have no time. And sometimes there isn't any computer at the hotel. And my father would not let me use his laptop. I sometimes take paper-books with me when I go on holidays, but usually I don't have time to read them.

Yuya:

- I take comic books with me when I go on holiday.

Researcher:

- *(Asking the boys) So do you think reading is a very girly thing to do?*

Eric and Yuya:

- No, I like to read. I don't think it is a girly thing to do.

Yuya:

- I like to read books too, but comic books sometimes. I am now reading the Chinese comic books *Laofuzi (Master Q)* – I like it very much, it is so funny! I don't read Chinese, but I just look at the pictures. I read Japanese comic books sometimes, because my mother is Japanese. But my mother gave away my Japanese comic books to someone.

<p>Eric:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ But Japanese comic books are very violent. <p>Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not all of them.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you think Naxos has too many books for girls?</i>
<p>Colin, Eric and Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No, I think it is OK.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Given you have a paper-book and a Naxos audio- book of the same title, what would you prefer?</i>
<p>Colin, Eric, Yuya:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I prefer Naxos, because you can listen, and it helps you imagine the stories and easier to read. I can follow it easily. <p>Cherie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I prefer Naxos, it has got different expressions. It helps me imagine. And you don't have to read it, you just listen – it has got music and stuff and the sound effects. Also Naxos has more details....(<i>referring to the completed version not the abridged version</i>).
<p><i>End of Focus Group Interview</i></p>

(APPENDIX 8) – Part 2.

Focus Group Interview II: Kingston School

- **Date:** Monday, 30th April 2007
- **Time:** 12:00 – 12:30 (took place during a library class)
- **Place:** Library, Kingston Elementary School
- **Present/Facilitator:** Ms. Gabrielle Chiu (School Librarian)
- **No. of Students at Focus Group:** 3

Individual Student Participants' Profiles:			
Name:	Age:	Gender:	Students' Profiles:
Ashley	11	Girl	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL Low User.▪ 6th-grade student.▪ Keen reader.▪ Verbal and eloquent.▪ Claimed to have never tried NSWL, due to connection problems, despite of many attempts, and lost access password at the end.▪ Keen reader.▪ Claimed to like animals.▪ Chinese by race.
Grace	11	Girl	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL Medium-High user.▪ 6th-grade student.▪ A keen reader of paper-books, but also uses NSWL frequently.▪ Most verbal, eloquent, and confident – never shy about expression her opinions.▪ Already a very keen reader. Since already having a strong command of reading, speaking skills, she does not have high opinions like the Bradbury students. However, she admitted that she uses NSWL daily.▪ Capable of giving very clear and to-the-point criticism about NSWL and why she likes and dislikes certain NSWL features.▪ Chinese by race.
Yuko	11	Girl	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NSWL High User.▪ 6th-grade student.▪ Keen reader of both NSWL and paper-books.▪ Neutral opinions towards NSWL.▪ Also verbal and eloquent.▪ Uses the public library regularly.▪ Of mixed race (½ Chinese and ½ Japanese)

Notes:

1. Although Ms. Gabrielle Chiu (Librarian) was present in the same room (School Library), she did not take part/assist in the actual focus group interview at all. She was conducting a library class with the other students in the same room, but only observing/supervising this interview from a distance.
2. Since all 3 girls were from the same class, they seemed to be very much acquainted with each other – this truly facilitated the flow of discussions among the 3 girls. All 3 girls did not indicate any shyness or reluctance in expressing their own opinions. It seemed that the whole interview provided a good opportunity for these 3 girls to talk casually about their

common interests or hobbies, without any pressures from the teachers or the formality from a regular classroom lesson. They seemed to be having a lot of fun, and enjoyed taking part in this focus group interview.

3. Based on researcher's speculation, all 3 girls came from reasonably resourceful families – based on the amount and range of activities engaged in outside school, they seemed to receive much encouragement, resources and attention from their parents to fully develop their potentials/talents, both culturally and athletically, that is, including reading.
4. All participants did not mention whether they had their own computers at home or not.
5. At the end of the interview, the 3 girls wanted Ms. CHIU to relay a message to the researcher – that is, requesting if they could see the results of this research at the end, and also asked if they would be featured on TV later.
6. The language abilities among the 3 girls are quite even, and they all seemed to be very aware of their abilities as well. For example, they were not afraid to tell or indicate to a stranger (the researcher) that they were smart. But by comparison, Grace was most verbal, and most confident out of all 3. Unlike the Bradbury boys, the Kingston girls were capable of using complete and more sophisticated sentences, and I rarely needed to demand further clarification from them. In addition, the girls had a lot to say, and I only had to make very little effort in leading/generating the discussions.

(Actual Focus Group Interview)

Researcher:

- *What do you all think of the NSWL?*

Grace:

- I prefer paper-books, because I can read it at my own speed. I can stop at any chapter. With Naxos, if I get lost, I have to listen to the whole section again. The screen (computer) is too bright, and I always have to scroll down to read the text onscreen.

Yuko:

- It is more interesting, it is like real life. I like the music too.

Ashley:

- I cannot tell, because I could not get connected.

Grace:

- Some readers, I don't like. For example, the person doing the voice for Lorrie in *Little Women*, every time I hear that voice, I want to skip ahead.

Researcher:

- *How often do you listen to NSWL?*

Grace:

- I wasn't before but now I use it very often. I use it everyday now.

Ashley:

- I lost the password.

Yuko:

- Sometimes once a week, and maybe twice a month.

Researcher:

- *Do your parents still read to you at home?*

Ashley, Grace and Yuko:

- No, that is too baby!!!!

Yuko:

- But my mother sometimes asks me questions about the books that I read – just to see how much I understand them, instead of reading to me.

<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you also use the public library and the school library?</i>
<p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not a lot, because the English books they are too babyish. Besides, it is hard to get the books you want. Also too far from home. (referring to the public library.) <p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I take books out from school library every week, if the books are good. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They do not have enough English books. (referring to the public library.) <p>Ashley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The children libraries (at the local public libraries), they are so small, sometimes even smaller than this room (referring to their own school library). <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (after short pause) I sometimes go there to look for information for my school project. And I use their library bus (referring to mobile libraries – part of public library service, taking books to different residential areas and communities in HK.) It is easy, I can just take the books and go home. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I go there to look for information for my school project too, and I sometimes go there for entertainment. <p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I/we read at least 1 book/some books everyday. <p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ My parents and other friends sometimes buy books for us as gifts. But we like to go to the bookstores and buy our own books, because we could choose what we want to read.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>We noticed that there were children using NSWL on Christmas holiday, were you the ones reading it on Christmas? Why do you think they were listening to NSWL instead of playing?</i>
<p>Ashley and Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No, I was not using it during Xmas. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I think I forgot about it during Xmas. <p>Ashley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I could not get connected to Naxos at all. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listened to NSWL because I got bored and wanted to find something to do. <p><i>(Researcher then asked was it because your family was Japanese, and therefore you did not celebrate Christmas...)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No, we also celebrate Christmas, but after dinner, I got nothing to do, I got bored. So I listened to Naxos.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What kinds of books do you enjoy reading?</i>
<p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like anything, from modern to classics, to semi-classics.

<p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like creepy books, and books about mysteries or mysterious things. <p>Ashley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like to read about animals, and comedy. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like the book, <i>Little Princess</i>, it is in Naxos. I also like the <i>Winds in the Willow</i>, I think it is also in Naxos, and I also have a tape of it which I listen to at home.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Do you think boys and girls like to read different books, for example, girls prefer to read books like Heidi and Alice in the Wonderland, while boys prefer to read Tom Sawyer? And most boys don't like read...</i>
<p>Ashley, Grace, and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think boys like books about dragons. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not really, you know boy, Jentin in my class, he reads very thick books. <p>Ashley and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I also know many boys who read a lot. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a boy that I know who likes books about fairies. I asked why you like books like this? So are you a boy or a girl, and he told me that "<i>I am gay</i>"! (giggles from girls again.)
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>When do you usually listen to NSWL?</i>
<p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually at night. I usually listen to Naxos, then I do something else, then I go to sleep. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whenever I have time.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What do you want to be when you grow up? (Researcher wanted to know whether students' interests and dreams in life were in fact related to their habits and interests in reading).</i>
<p>Ashley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to be a dog trainer, because I love dogs and animals. (followed by giggles from the girls.) <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to become an author. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not sure. Once I wanted to be an artist, then I wanted to an author, then I wanted to become a scientist, or maybe a lawyer....and also you know the person who does the voices for the movies, and cartoons, or maybe a painter... <p>Ashley and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you not say you wanted to become a musician - a pianist? <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, maybe to become a jazz musician. I like jazz.
<p>Researcher:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What are your hobbies? (Researcher wanted to know whether students' hobbies were in fact related to their habits and interests in reading).</i>
<p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like to skate, we all do! <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like dancing, I do ballet. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like dance too, I did Chinese dancing. I play the piano.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you like to read books about football? (since there is a book entitled <i>The history of the World Cup</i> inside NSWL)</i>
<p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Football is boring!
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you think Naxos has too many books for boys OR too many books for girls?</i>
<p>Ashley, Grace and Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No, I think it is quite even. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (after a short pause) But based on the list of books I went through inside Naxos, I think there are more classics and more books for girls.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Given you have a paper-book and a Naxos audio-book of the same title, what would you prefer?</i>
<p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Definitely a paper-book. But if I have nothing to do, I would listen to Naxos as well. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I like both.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Would you prefer to watch TV or listen to NSWL in your free time?</i>
<p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I don't watch TV a lot, maybe thirty minutes everyday. But I prefer to read a paper-book.
<p>Researcher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Is there any thing they would do to improve the NSWL?</i>
<p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In NSWL, the easy and difficult books are all mixed together. Some books have thirty-something chapters and some have two chapters, but they are all mixed together. I think they should list out how many chapters the books have. I think books of with similar length and different levels should be grouped together. <p>Grace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, they also don't have pictures, just the cover of the book. Maybe they should add more pictures. <p>Yuko:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, I also think they should add more pictures to NSWL."
<p>End of Focus Group Interview</p>

(APPENDIX 9)

INFORMATION ON NSWL READING COMPETITION (Organized by Bradbury Elementary School Library)

Bradbury School Learning Centre

Naxos Spoken Word Library Reading Competition

Purpose

The goals of running reading competitions based on the use of the Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) are:

1. To encourage students to regularly listen to audio-books, to engage fully with the titles that they listen to, and to have fun in the process.
2. To promote and encourage the use of NSWL. This is important as increasing the number of students using the service will help to justify the Learning Centre's subscription to the service.
3. To measure over time any improvements in students' literacy development.
4. To measure over time any increase in the usage of NSWL.

Proposed format

- Competitions will be held on a monthly basis starting in December. Each competition will be based on a single title from either the Junior Fiction or Children's Classics collections.
- It is envisaged that students will be asked 15-20 comprehension questions that will test how well they have understood the text. In addition there will be a 'tiebreaker' question at the end that will be more open, for example 'which character in the book was your favourite and why?'
- Winners will be those students that submit the most correct answers, with the tiebreaker question being used to separate those who have achieved the same number of correct answers.
- Prizes will be audio-books on CD donated to the Learning Centre by Naxos.

(APPENDIX 9) – Continues

NSWL COMPETITION

The Learning Centre will be running a regular competition based on the new Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL). We will be testing your knowledge of a particular book in the NSWL collection. Winners will receive prizes (see below for details).

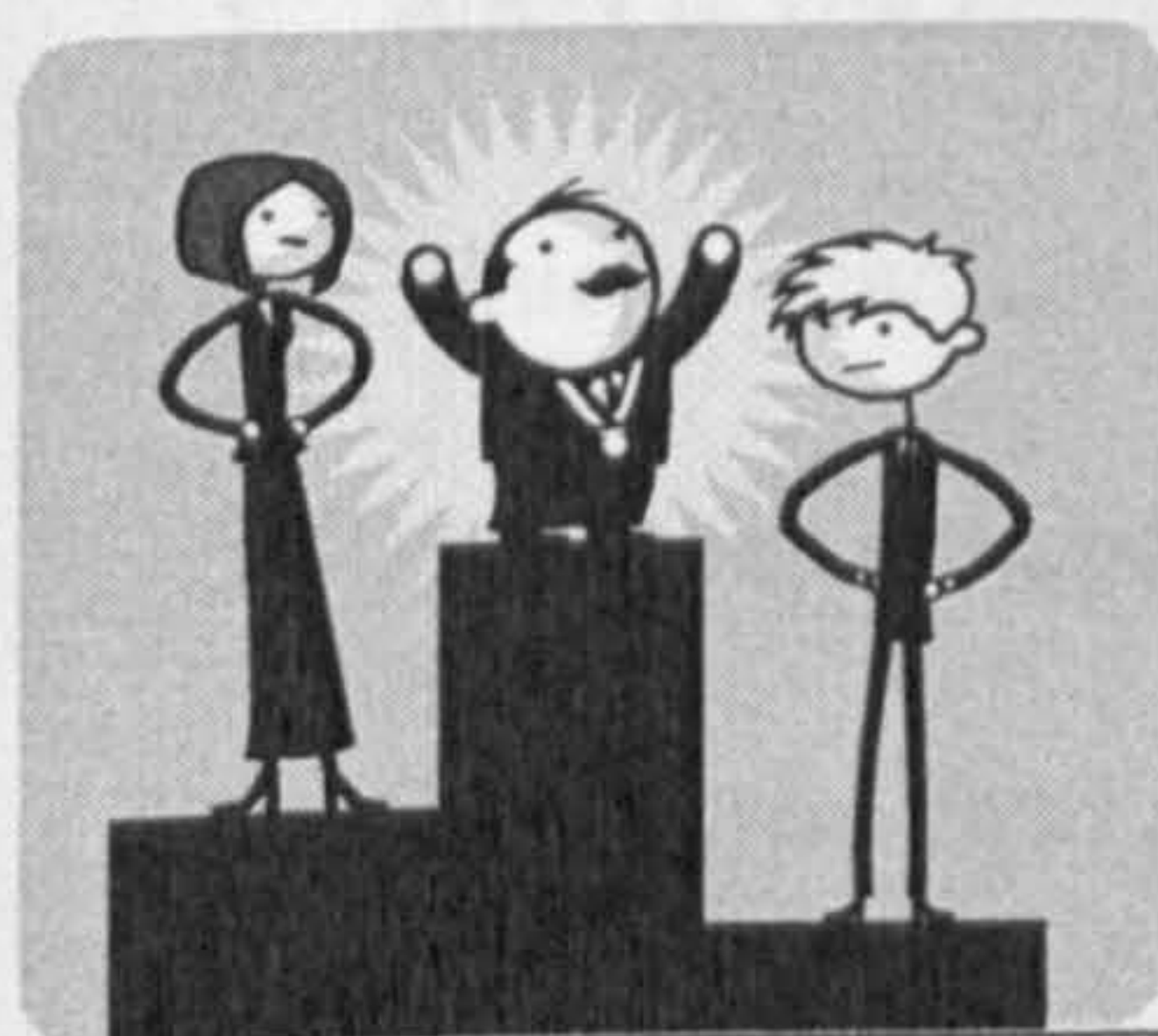
You will need to answer 10 questions testing your understanding of the book. There will also be a tie-breaker question to separate those students that get the same score.

The book for this round of the competition is:

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

For details on how to access the NSWL, check the Learning Centre's CLC page.

To enter, pick up an entry form from the Learning Centre. The closing date for entry is the last day of term. Winners will be announced at the start of next term.



PRIZES:

The three entries with the highest marks will each receive a CD copy of a Naxos audio-book.

In this round the audio-book prize is: *The Nutcracker*

BRADBURY SCHOOL LEARNING CENTRE

Naxos Spoken Word Library Reading Competition

Purpose

The goals of running reading competitions based on the use of the Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) are:

- To encourage students to regularly listen to audio-books, to engage fully with the titles that they listen to, and to have fun in the process.
- To promote and encourage the use of NSWL. This is important as increasing the number of students using the service will help to justify the Learning Centre's subscription to the service.
- To measure over time any improvements in students' literacy development.
- To measure over time any increase in the usage of NSWL.

Proposed format

Competitions will be held on a monthly basis starting in December. Each competition will be based on a single title from either the Junior Fiction or Children's Classics collections.

It is envisaged that students will be asked 15-20 comprehension questions that will test how well they have understood the text. In addition there will be a 'tiebreaker' question at the end that will be more open, for example 'which character in the book was your favourite and why?'

Winners will be those students that submit the most correct answers, with the tiebreaker question being used to separate those who have achieved the same number of correct answers.

Prizes will be audio-books on CD donated to the Learning Centre by Naxos.

(APPENDIX 10)

NSWL COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

For First *NSWL Competition*

(Designed and Prepared by Bradbury School Librarian)

NSWL Competition Entry Form

NAME:

CLASS:

1. Which country was Mary born in?
2. What is the name of the housemaid who looks after Mary?
3. What is the name of the English county where Mary lives?
4. Which animal shows Mary the way into the secret garden?
5. How many children does Mrs. Sowerby have?
6. Who is the first person that Mary shows into the Secret Garden?
7. Why does Colin have a tantrum?
8. After visiting the Secret Garden, how long does Colin say he will live for?
9. Why did Mr. Craven lock up the Secret Garden?
10. Who sends the letter asking Mr. Craven to come back to Misselthwaite Manor?

Tie-breaker question:

Which character in the story was your favourite? Explain your choice in one hundred words or less (write on the back of the sheet).

ENTRIES MUST BE RETURNED TO MR. CHAN BY FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER

(APPENDIX 11)

NSWL COMPETITION ENTRY FORM
For Second NSWL Competition

(Designed and Prepared by Bradbury School Librarian)

NSWL Contest Part 2
Jason and the Argonauts

1. When Jason was young, who did his father send him to live with? (Chiron the Centaur)
2. Why was Jason shocked by the old woman that he meets on the way to Iolcos? (She appears out of nowhere)
3. What does Jason lose when he is carrying the old woman across the river? (His sandal)
4. When Jason declares that he will try to retrieve the golden fleece, why is Pelias pleased? (The expedition will take a long time / Jason will probably be killed in the attempt)
5. What was the name of Jason's ship? (The Argo)
6. How do the Argonauts try to find a way past the great clashing rocks to reach the Bosphorous? (They release a pigeon to find a way through)
7. Why had Fineos been cursed by the gods? (He had revealed things to men the gods did not want them to know)
8. How does the goddess Aphrodite help Jason? (She makes Medea fall in love with him)
9. What creature guards the golden fleece? (A dragon serpent)
10. Who is waiting at the docks when Jason, Medea and Orpheus are escaping with the golden fleece? (Medea's step-brother Apsirtus)
11. What saves the Argonauts from the sirens' song? (Orpheus singing the song of Perseus)
12. How does Jason die? (He is crushed by the talking figurehead of the Argo)

TIEBREAKER

Do you think that Medea was right or wrong to kill her step-brother to make sure that the Argonauts escaped with the golden fleece? Explain your answer.

(APPENDIX 12) – Part 1.

BRADBURY LIBRARY E-NEWSLETTERS TO PARENTS (NOV. 2007) –

Notifying/Promoting NSWL Among Parent Community
(Prepared by Bradbury School and School Librarian)

BRADBURY NEWS

Informing – Celebrating Achievement – Sharing School Life

2006/07 No. 06

Friday 11th November 2006

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome back after what I hope was a refreshing and relaxing mid term break.

As your new principal, I am interested in your comments, thoughts and ideas about our school.

Schools are dynamic places, always evolving and moving. It is my job to make sure we are moving forward, making the changes that are necessary while maintaining the things that are working well. I am interested in knowing what you think about our school and so you will find attached with this newsletter a questionnaire. Please take some time to fill this out, then return it to the school office. You do not need to add your name unless you wish to.

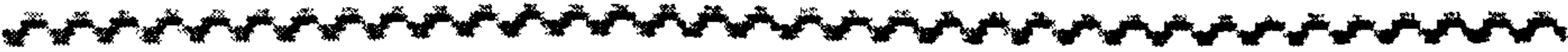
Once all the data is in, compiled and analysed, a report will be written and this information will come back to you.

Many thanks for your help – your views are important to me.

Have a good week.

Sandra Webster - Principal

IMPORTANT DATES



<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TIME</u>
14 November 2006	Class 5F to Lantau Island	8.45 am – 5.15. pm
15 November 2006 – 17 November 2006	Class 4L/4R to Cheung Chau Camp	
16 November 2006	Class 5A to Lantau Island	8.45 am – 5.15 pm
16 November 2006	Year 2 PIZZA Sale	12.00pm – 1.00 pm
16 November 2006	PARENTAL CONSULTATIONS (Please refer to your scheduled appointments)	3.00 pm – 7.30 pm
17 November 2006	Class 5V to Lantau Island	8.45 am – 5.15 pm
22 November 2006 – 24 November 2006	Class 4E/4C to Cheung Chau Camp	

(b) PARENTAL CONSULTATIONS

Please be reminded that Parental Consultations are being held next week. By now, you should have received a letter from your child's class teacher confirming your appointment. The purpose of this meeting, relatively early in the school year, is to discuss your child's progress and their next steps in learning with you. We would like to invite you to arrive at school ahead of the scheduled meeting allowing yourself sufficient time to browse through a selection of their work which will also be available. When you arrive at school, please go straight to the classroom area where you may wait until your scheduled appointment.

J. Ainsworth – Assistant Principal



I.C.T. NEWS

SCHOOL WEBSITE. The new "our Events" page on the school website (www.bradbury.edu.hk) now has some photos of the recent Year 4 educational visit to Lantau Island. Please take a look.

SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET. ICT can offer many positive educational and social benefits to students, but unfortunately there are some dangers. As in any other area of life, children can be vulnerable and may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. At Bradbury we take a number of precautions to ensure that the Internet is a safe environment for the students, for example we have a Firewall and block undesirable websites. We also regularly discuss with the students issues relating to responsible use of the Internet. One means for parents to overcome such problems is to articulate the family values about responsible use and also how to react if inappropriate material is accessed.

Various programs can be purchased to create a safe environment. For example, Net Nanny is a package that stops porn and other illicit material from invading the computer by filtering and blocking web content; it limits time spent online by giving parents the tools they need to restrict the times of day and the amount of time spent online; it stops illegal file sharing so that parents can block "file sharing" or "chat"; it protects private information by filtering it out of the data that leaves your computer in e-mail, chat rooms, and on the web. To find out more about this program, carry out a "search" for the product. Symantec's Norton Internet Security also has parental controls.

Some of the issues and risks are summarised below:

Copyright infringement

Copyright law applies on the internet, but infringement can extend to downloading music files and cutting and pasting homework assignments from others' work

Obsessive use of the internet and ICT

There is the potential for children to become obsessed with the internet and related technologies. Factors such as spending a significant amount of time online, deterioration of the quality of school work, diminished sleep time, or negative impacts upon family relationships, may all be indicators that the internet is taking too high a priority in a person's life.

Exposure to inappropriate materials

There is a risk that when using the internet, email or chat services, children may be exposed to inappropriate material. This may be material that is pornographic, hateful or violent in nature, encourages activities that are dangerous or illegal, or is just age-inappropriate or biased. One of the key benefits of the web is that it is open to all, but unfortunately this also means that those with extreme views are able to spread their distorted view of the world.

Inappropriate or illegal behaviour

Children may get involved in inappropriate, antisocial or illegal behaviour while using new technologies. Just as in the real world, groups or cliques can form online, and activities that start out as harmless fun, such as voicing an opposing opinion to another member of a chat room, can escalate to something more serious. Some children may become involved in much more serious activities. Possible risks include involvement in identity theft.

Physical danger

The threat of physical danger is perhaps the most worrying and extreme risk associated with the use of the internet and other technologies. A criminal minority make use of the internet and related services such as chat rooms to make contact with young people. There is also a risk that while online a young person might provide information that can personally identify them or others, or arrange to meet people they have met online, causing a risk to their safety or that of their family or friends.

For more information and links to other sources, including protective software go to:

NAXOS SPOKEN WORD LIBRARY (NSWL)

The NSWL is an online audio book resource newly acquired by our school library. With it you can access the entire critically acclaimed Naxos AudioBooks catalogue - over 1200 CDs. This includes many children's classics including *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Wind in the Willows*, and

Aesop's Fables.

We all know how important reading is to education, and this resource provides our students with a different way to discover and enjoy great works of literature.

Students may use the NSWL at lunchtimes in the Learning Centre. You may also access the resource from home. Detailed instructions on how to do this have been posted on the Learning Centre's CLC page.

C. Chan -Librarian

(APPENDIX 12) – Part 2.

BRADBURY LIBRARY E-NEWSLETTERS TO PARENTS (DEC. 2007) –



BRADBURY NEWS

Informing – Celebrating Achievement - Sharing School Life

006/2007 No. 08

Friday 8th December 2006

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



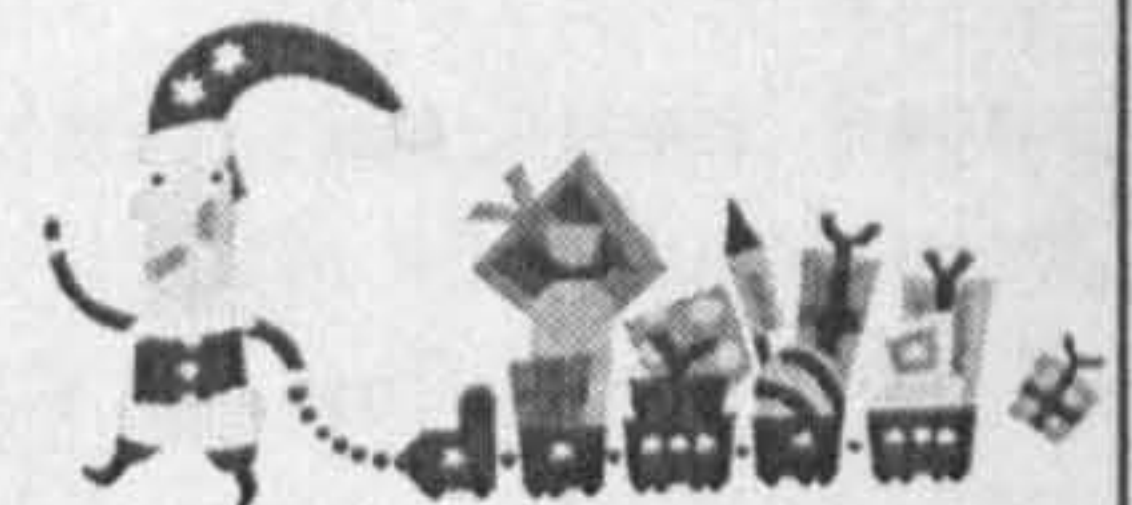
We have had a very busy week at school, the highlight of which has been without a doubt, the Year 2 production of 'The Grumpy Sheep.' It is always such a pleasure to watch our children, no matter their age, perform. Additionally, here at Bradbury School, the opportunity for students to be exposed to a wide range of educational experiences is valued. Congratulations to all Year 2 children!

Many thanks to their teachers and educational assistants, to Mr. Clothier, Mr. Ainsworth and Mrs. Beckett, as well as to all the mums who made the costumes. Well done everyone.

Our annual Christmas Carols evening is Thursday 14th December, and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Sandra Webster

S. Webster
Principal



IMPORTANT DATES

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME
8 December 2006	YEAR 2 Presentation	9.15 a.m.
8 December 2006	YEAR 4 Christmas Party	-----
12 December 2006	YEAR 6 Christmas Party	-----
13 December 2006	YEAR 2 to Science Museum	8.45 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.
14 December 2006	Christmas Carol Evening	6.30 – 9.00 p.m.
15 December 2006	YEAR 3 Christmas Party	-----
18 December 2006	YEAR 2 Christmas Party	-----
19 December 2006	Learning Support Class Christmas Party	5.30 pm – 9.00 pm
20 December 2006	YEAR 1 Carol Concert YEAR 1 Christmas Party	11.15 a.m.
21 December 2006	YEAR 5 Christmas Party	-----
22 December 2006	LAST DAY OF AUTUMN TERM (Classes will end at 12:00 noon today) Dress Christmas Casual Day	12.00 NOON
23 December 2006 – 7 January 2007	Christmas Holidays	-----
8 January 2007	Classes Begin for the Spring Term	8.30 a.m.
19 February – 25 February 2007	Chinese New Year Holidays	-----

INNER MONGOLIA UPDATE

There is a Chinese proverb which says,

'Great journeys begin with a single step'.

It was with excited steps that Jack Bath (Y6), Ines Brazier (Y4), Molly Crisp (Y5), Milana Krishnamurthy (Y3), Sarah and Jack Steadson along with their mothers (whose excitement was somewhat tempered by the daunting 'unknown' of the following few days), George Muir (husband of Mrs Muir), Winnie Chui (mother of Jason Ngan now in SIS), Richard Gardener (father of James Y6) and myself, set out for Xinghe, Inner Mongolia in early November. As you will be aware this was the third such visit made to the Beiguan Primary School this year and we felt we were being met by true friends when we were greeted at Beijing Airport by Captain Tony and Li Pei, the Principal. It is hoped that a further visit will be made in March 2007.

There are two schools, Beiguan and Gao Miaozi Primary Schools, and eleven teaching stations in the group which has Li Pei as Principal. We spent the first day in the Beiguan Primary School, and were greeted on our arrival by a welcome ceremony presented by the students, which included singing and dancing – percussion instruments purchased by Bradbury School students were used. Each one of our party was given a red neck scarf to wear - in China these are normally presented to students who are top of their class. In turn we sang in English, and taught the children 'Love is something...' and 'If you're happy....' The group did very well despite having had no practice.

Later in the day we were able to visit some of the homes in which the children board during the school term, due to the fact that their families live in remote areas. Small rooms accommodate 15-20 children, and we watched as each child performed a specific task at lunch, serving the food, washing up the plates, pots and pans etc.

In the afternoon our group was divided into three teams and focussed on art, maths games and singing activities. We worked in each of the classrooms, with students staying behind after school had ended to have another go! Our Bradbury children were amazing in the way they interacted with the local students, with language in no way being a barrier to the development of friendships. They were proactive in trying to use some of their Mandarin, much to the delight of our Bradbury Mandarin Department. The basketball stands and nets purchased previously by Bradbury students have brought great pleasure and were seen in constant use.

The Beiguan Primary School students have so very little, but wanted to share the school bags filled with stationery items that we had purchased from Bradbury fund-raising, with their friends in their sister-school Gao Miaozi Primary School, a few miles away. Our Bradbury students had been up late the night before filling the almost 250 schoolbags with the various items. The following day we visited this school and our students were able to give one bag to each student. We will never forget the look on the faces of these children as they received their gift – probably the first gift they have ever received in their lives. Crossroads (HK) had given us additional adult stationery packs and there were exactly the right number for the teachers to each be given one.

Later we visited some of the teaching stations, eating lunch of potatoes, noodles and cabbage, in three of the students' homes. The families are so poor that meat and fish are a luxury rarely enjoyed and water has to be collected daily from a stream some two kilometres away. We can be justly proud of our six child-ambassadors and their families and friends of Bradbury School. They proved that they were totally adaptable and inventive, and exhibited a genuine love and care for those they met. On our return to HK, each member of the group participated in a school assembly, sharing some of their experiences. As a result of this, several children within our school, both individually and in a group, have organised small fund-raising activities – Yehudi Chan (Y3) wrote a poem which he subsequently sold and a dad kindly donated the change he nightly emptied from his pockets.

The needs of the children in Xinghe are great - a well (\$20,000), school desks and chairs (\$32,000), heating stoves (\$4000), a dormitory (120,000), to list a few – all items which we very much take for granted.

Over the next two weeks Year 2 will have a retiring collection at the end of their Christmass



Production and a portion of the money collected at the school carol evening on Thursday December 14th, will be donated to our Bradbury-Xinghe Project.

In addition to this, on Friday, December 22nd the children are being allowed to 'dress casual' for our Christmas Assembly and are invited to bring an amount of money of their own to donate to the project.

I would urge you to allow your child/children to raise this amount by doing small tasks for friends and family members. We will collate the children's stories of how they raised their money into a book and display this in the entrance alongside photos of our most recent visit to Xinghe.

As in the words of Mrs Muir, 'They have so little, we have so much, will you please help us touch their lives. Together we can make a difference.'

P. Roper – Class 3R TeacherR Teacher

YEAR ONE CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Year 1 will be singing Christmas Carols in the School Hall on Wednesday 20th December 2006 at 11.15 a.m. Parents are welcome to come along on this day to enjoy a morning of carols. Parking is available at school from 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Please remember to take your car out by 12:15 p.m. as the playground will be used by the rest of the students for lunch break.

We hope to see you there.

C. Beckett – Assistant Principal (Lower Phase)

LEARNING CENTRE NEWS: NSWL COMPETITION



In order to encourage student use of the new Naxos Spoken Word Library resource, the Learning Centre will be running a series of competitions based on its use for Years 5 and 6. Each competition will be based on a particular book available on the NSWL. Entrants will be tested on their knowledge of that book and the best three entries will receive a prize.

For the first competition I have chosen the classic children's novel *The Secret Garden*. Interested students may pick up entry forms from the Learning Centre. Please refer to the Learning Centre's CLC page for information on how to access the NSWL.

The prizes will be audio books on CD generously donated by Naxos Digital Services Ltd.

C. Chan – Librarian

ICT NEWS: DEVELOPING OUR CHILDREN'S KEYBOARD SKILLS

It is our aim, during each weekly ICT lesson, that students spend 10 minutes developing their keyboard skills. For this purpose, we use the programs: "Learn PC: Mouse and Keyboard Skills" (published by Neptune Computer Technology) with Year 1 and the LSC; "Ten Thumbs" (published by Run Revolution) with Years 2 and 3; "Touch Type" (published by Iota) with Years 4 – 6.

However, as with learning the times tables, it is apparent that those students who are most proficient practice at home as well as at school because the breadth of the curriculum makes it difficult to devote lots of time to this. There are a number of programs on the market which develop keyboarding skills

and some educational internet sites have typing tutors. One such site is:
<http://www.gamequarium.com/keyboarding.htm>

C. Farrington – ICT Leader

BRADBURY SCHOOL WEBSITE

We invite you to view 'Our Events' pages on our website. They consist of photos of Year 4 and Year 6 camps and the Year 5 river study trip to Lantau. All the photos on the website link to larger versions for better viewing. To see the larger versions, please click on the small photos that are on our website pages. The picture on the 'events' page is a copy of a collage/painting of children in Bradbury's playground that was made by Karen Olbery, an ex-teacher of Bradbury School. The original can be seen in the corridor of the school office.

C. Farrington – ICT Leader

(APPENDIX 13)

BRADBURY SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS:

(Prepared by Bradbury School Librarian)

BRADBURY SCHOOL – QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. How well do you think students at Bradbury School achieve academically?
2. How much do our students enjoy their education?
3. How well informed do you feel you are about
 - i) your child's learning
 - ii) school events
 - iii) our school mission/vision and values
4. How good is the quality of teaching and learning at Bradbury School?
5. How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of students?
6. What are 3 things we do well at Bradbury School?
7. What 3 things do you think are areas for development for Bradbury School?
8. Other comments.



Kingston International School 京斯敦國際學校

Date: December 11th, 2006
Ref: KIS2006098

Dear Parents,

*Home Reading with Online Audio-Books
(Naxos Spoken Word Library)*

We know that the more children read, the better they will do in school! I would like to let you know about some special reading homework your child will be doing this year.

The Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) is an online audio-book resource newly acquired by our school library. Every day/week, your child will choose an online audio-book from Naxos Spoken Word Library (NSWL) for extra practice, as well as for fun reading.

The NSWL can be accessed remotely from your home at:
www.NaxosSpokenWordLibrary.com

- Username: KISmm
- Password: KISmm

Maximum number of simultaneous users of the service: **FOUR**
Services valid from: **1st September 2006 until 31st August 2007 (12-month)**
Sound Quality: **64K Bytes per Second**

NSWL is one of the most comprehensive collections of audio-book materials available online with contents ranging from children's classics, junior classic fictions, as well as other classic fictions by Austen, Dickens, and sports book like The History of World Cup, etc., and it is available around the clock.

Please help your child find a book from the NSWL, and practice with them. The extra practice will help your child be a more successful student. We will be contacting you to talk about what we are doing in our library classes, and how you can help with this special project.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Scott Jackson
Principal

(APPENDIX 15)

**KINGSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL –
NSWL LISTENING WORKSHEET FOR STUDENTS**

(Prepared by Kingston School Librarian)

NAXOS SPOKEN WORD LIBRARY

Name: _____ **Class:** _____

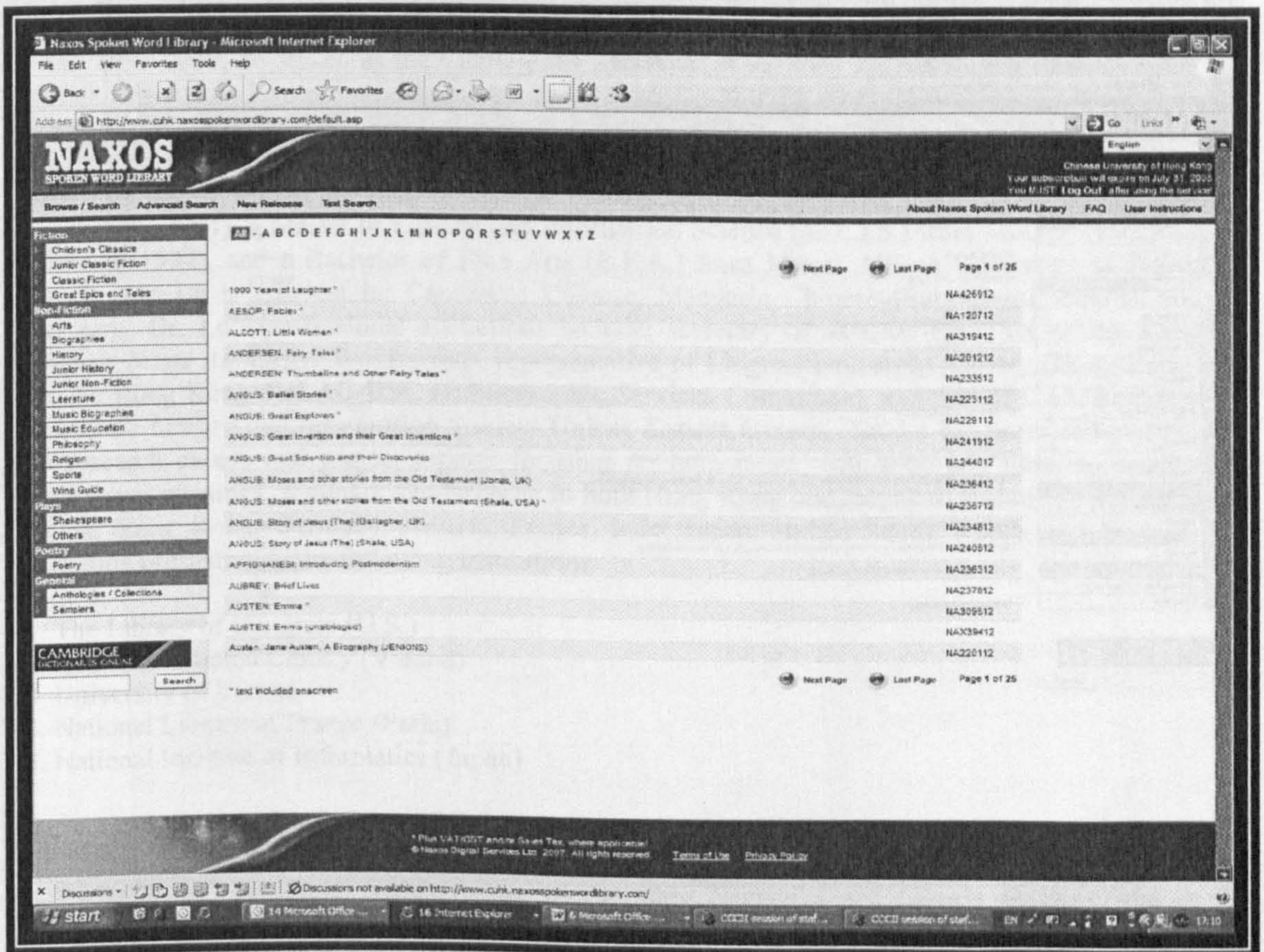
[illegible]

- NSWL Website: <http://www.NaxosSpokenWordLibrary.com>
- Username: KISmm
- Password: KISmm

(APPENDIX 16)

DUMPSCREEN EXAMPLES OF NSWL's USER INTERFACE

(Example A) - Dumpscreen Example Of NSWL's User Interface (General Browse Screen)



(APPENDIX 16) – Continues

(Example B) - Dumpscreen Example of a List Of Audio-Book Titles Under the *Children's Classics Literature* Category insider NSWL.

Naxos Spoken Word Library - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.cuhk.naxosspokenwordlibrary.com/default.asp?page_name=5_contentQuery&genre=Children's%20Classics

NAXOS
SPOKEN WORD LIBRARY

Chinese University of Hong Kong
Your subscription will expire on July 31, 2008
You MUST Log Out after using the service

Home / Search Advanced Search New Releases Text Search About Naxos Spoken Word Library FAQ User Instructions

Fiction:
Children's Classics
Junior Classic Fiction
Classic Fiction
Great Epics and Tales

Non-Fiction:
Arts
Biographies
History
Junior History
Junior Non-Fiction
Literature
Music Biographies
Music Education
Philosophy
Religion
Sports
Wine Guide

Plays:
Shakespeare
Others

Poetry:
Poetry

General:
Anthologies / Collections
Samplers

AB - ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Page 1 of 1

AESOP: Fables *	NA120712
ANDERSEN: Fairy Tales *	NA201212
Collection: Classic Fairy Stories *	NA222212
Collection: Sperry's Magic Piano and other children's favourites	NA227912
COLLIER: Pinocchio *	NA211912
GRAHAM: Wind in the Willows (The) *	NA327712
GRIMM: Fairy Tales *	NA200512
GRIMM: Fairy Tales, Vol. 2 *	NA230312
ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS - SINBAD THE SAILOR AND OTHER STORIES	8555889
PROKOFIEV: Cinderella Suites / TCHAIKOVSKY: Sleeping Beauty (Children's Classic)	8554610
PROKOFIEV: Peter and the Wolf / BRITTEN: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra (Children's...)	8554170
PROKOFIEV: Romeo and Juliet (Children's Classic)	8557675
SAINT-SAENS: Carnival of the Animals / RAVEL: Mother Goose (Children's Classic)	8554463
TCHAIKOVSKY: Nutcracker / RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Christmas Eve (Children's Classic)	8555342
TCHAIKOVSKY: Swan Lake (Children's Classic)	8557174

* text included onscreen

Page 1 of 1

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS ONLINE

Search

* Plus VAT/5% and/or taxes (if applicable)
© Naxos Digital Services Ltd. 2007. All rights reserved. Terms of Use Privacy Policy

Discussions not available on http://www.cuhk.naxosspokenwordlibrary.com/

start 14 Microsoft Office ... 16 Internet Explorer ... 5 Microsoft Office ... COCII session of staf... COCII session of staf... EN 11

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

From 2007-2009, Dr. Patrick Lo served as the Music Librarian at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, University Library System, cataloguing and organizing a highly significant and valuable donation of Chinese music research materials from a retired Harvard professor, Rulan Chao Pian. From 1996-2007, he served as the Cataloguing Librarian at the Lingnan University Library, Hong Kong. Pian Music Project homepage: <http://rulanhaopian.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/>

Dr. Lo earned his Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) from University of Bristol University (U.K.) in May, 2009. He has a Master of Arts in Design Management (M.A.) from Hong Kong Polytechnic University (2004), a Master of Library and Information Science (M.L.I.S.) from McGill University (Canada; 1994), and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) from Mount Allison University, (Canada; 1992). Dr. Lo is efficient in: Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese (Putunghua), English and German. Dr. Lo's professional affiliations include: secretary of JULAC-HKCAN (*Hong Kong Chinese Name Authority*) Workgroup, representative of Lingnan University Library (Hong Kong) for the Hong Kong JULAC-BSC (Bibliographic Services Committee), member of CALIS (*China Academic Library and Information System*) Unicat Expert Group. Dr. Lo has presented close to 40 research papers and project reports focusing on humanities, education and librarian science workgroup meetings, seminars, conferences in both Hong Kong and overseas, including: Mainland China, Hong Kong, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Japan, United States, Korea, and Sweden; including presenting at the following institutions:

1. The Library of Congress (U.S.)
2. Austrian National Library (Vienna)
3. University of Vienna
4. National Library of France (Paris)
5. National Institute of Informatics (Japan)

Dr. Lo's recent professional activity includes presenting "*Using Outsource Data of Digital Resources in Creating Our Own Bibliographic Records: Lingnan University Library's Experience in Converting Naxos Music Library and Spoken Word Library Online Titles to MARC Records*" at the 72nd IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Conference in Seoul, Korea, in August, 2006. Full paper available at: http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/papers/123-Tam_Lo-en.pdf

Dr. Lo's research interests include: latest developments of Metadata, Chinese authority works, and cataloguing among Chinese libraries in Asia and North America; exploring potentials for resources sharing among Chinese libraries in Asia; future development and enhancement of bibliographic records; users' interaction with the online catalogue; Western classical music, especially Italian operas, vocal music of German Post-Romantic period, German Lieder (German art songs), etc.

Award(s):

1. *Most Active Presenter Award of HKIUG* (Hong Kong Innovative Users Group) Annual Meeting in December 2006.
2. 2 等獎 - 香港嶺南大學圖書館把聯機公共查詢目錄提升成圖書館資源門戶網站的實踐 - 2007 數字圖書館建設與應用研究會征文二等獎.

Recent Professional Activities:

- 2007 Reporter of Recent Music Serials Publications in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau of *Fontes Artis Musicae Journal*.
- 2008 Reporter of Recent Monograph Publications in Mainland China of *Fontes Artis Musicae Journal*.

Dr. Lo's other professional publications on education also include the following:

1. *Amazon.com: the New and Unparallel Bookbuying Experience*. Available at: http://t07.cgpublisher.com/proposals/87/index_html
2. *How Do Academic Libraries and Librarians Manage Change in the 21st Century?* Available at: http://u08.cgpublisher.com/proposals/4/index_html
3. *Empowering Your Library: Training and Professional Development, a Library Imperative!* Available at: http://ls7.cgpublisher.com/proposals/9/index_html
4. *How Academic Libraries and Librarians in Hong Kong Recruit Advocates to tell a New Library Story*. Available at: http://i07.cgpublisher.com/proposals/107/index_html
5. *The Musings of a Young and Curious Mind: Lingnan University Library's Experience in Developing Arts and Cultural Programmes for the University Community*. Available at: http://l07.cgpublisher.com/proposals/287/index_html
6. *The Politics of Bilingualism: An Analysis of Nationalism and Decolonization Behind the Policy of Mandatory Use of "Mother-Tongue Education" in Post-Colonial Hong Kong*. Available at: http://l06.cgpublisher.com/proposals/601/index_html
7. *The Transition from the Library OPAC to the Library Resources Portal: Difficulties and New Approaches in User Education for the Academic Librarians and Their Changing Roles*. Available at: http://t08.cgpublisher.com/proposals/1/index_html
8. *The "Most German of All German Operas": an Analysis of Richard Wagner's Die Meistersinger and Its Influence on Hitler's Nazi Ideology*. Available at: <http://h09.cgpublisher.com/proposals/21>

(APPENDIX 18)

**RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER RESEARCHERS,
TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS, etc.**

5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE BOOK

The proposal for this research study was accepted by the 5th International Conference on the Book Organizing Committee. This research study was also virtually presented at the 5th *International Conference on the Book*, from 20th to 22nd June, 2007, and the final was published in a referred journal, *International Journal of the Book*, Vol. 5, Issue No. 2, pp. 1-66. Available at: <http://ijb.cgpublisher.com/product/pub.27/prod.214>

Below is the email confirmation, issued by the 5th *International Conference on the Book* Organizing Committee on 13th October, 2006, stating that the proposal of this research study was accepted for inclusion in the programme of the 5th *International Conference on the Book*, and accepted proposal is available online at: <http://B07.cgpublisher.com/proposals/1>

The two teacher-librarians, Mr. Christopher Chan (*Teacher-Librarian Bradbury Elementary School*), and Ms. Gabrielle Chiu (*Teacher-librarian, Kingston Elementary School*) are featured as co-presenters/co-researchers of this research study.

Details of the 5th *International Conference on the Book* is available at: <http://book-conference.com/>

Email Confirmation Issued by the 5th International Conference on the Book Organizing Committee:

From: "Book Conference 2007" <info+L07@commongroundconferences.com>
Subject: Book Conference 2007 Proposal B07P0001
Date: Fri, 13 Oct 2006 16:50:14 -0000

Dear Patrick Lo,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Organising Committee of 5th International Conference on the Book. Your proposal has now been reviewed, and I am pleased to be able to inform you that it has been accepted for inclusion in the conference program. Details of your presentation have now been added to the public conference website at:

<http://B07.cgpublisher.com/proposals/1>

CONFERENCE DETAILS

5th International Conference on the Book will be held between 2007/06/20 and 2007/06/22. Presenters may also choose to submit a written version of their paper to the International Journal of the Book.

REGISTRATIONS

Please register as soon as possible. Presentations will only be scheduled into the conference program after your registration has been completed.

Registration options can be found at

http://B07.cgpublisher.com/registration_types.html and online registration forms at https://secure.cgpublisher.com/conferences/101/web/registrations/new_rego_entry.

Once your registration has been finalised, you will be given online access to the International Journal of the Book (journal site url) until one year after the end date of the conference. If you have any questions about registration, please contact Despina Hasapis at conferences@commongroundpublishing.com

SUBMISSION OF PAPERS

As soon as you have finalised your registration, papers can be submitted for refereeing. If your paper is accepted through the refereeing process, you will be requested to agree to a publishing agreement and submit a final version for typesetting and publication. Your paper will then be published in the Journal online bookstore International Journal of the Book (journal site url) where it will be made available in print and electronic formats.

You will also be given online access to the Journal from the point your registration is finalised to one year after the conference end date.

International Journal of the Book accepts paper submissions for refereeing on a continuous basis any time before the conference and until one month after the end date of the conference, which is of particular value to virtual participants as well as participants attending in person who require their paper to be refereed before the conference. If you wish your paper to be refereed before the conference, you must submit it at least three months before the conference. Please check the submission timeline on the conference website for submission close dates.

For further details on the submission and refereeing processes, please consult the website at http://B07.cgpublisher.com/submission_guidelines.html or email, support@commongroundpublishing.com

If you have any queries then please contact me at conferences@commongroundpublishing.com
Please quote proposal ID B07P0001 in any correspondence.

Yours Sincerely,

Despina Hasapis

For 5th International Conference on the Book Organising Committee

WORLD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CONGRESS: 75th IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE AND ASSEMBLY

Findings of this research study were also presented at *The World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Assembly*, held in Milan, Italy on 23rd to 27th August, 2009, under the Literacy and Reading Section with the Information Literacy Section, theme: "*Libraries Promoting Twenty-First Century Literacies*": <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla75/call-papers-en.htm>

Date: Wed, 21 Jan 2009 13:50:51 -0500

Subject: IFLA proposal

To: wotan455@hotmail.com

From: aernst@nmhschool.org

Dear Patrick Lo:

Congratulations on behalf of the Literacy and Reading and the Information Literacy Standing Committees of the International Federation of Library Association. Your paper proposal has been chosen for inclusion in the proceedings of the World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Assembly in August 2009, Milan, Italy. The IFLA conference theme is: "Libraries create futures: Building on cultural heritage". As you know, the theme of the Literacy and Reading and the Information Literacy program is "Libraries Promoting Twenty-First Century Literacies".

By the submission deadline there were 55 proposals from 29 countries, submitted in 4 languages. Two distinct selection committees had the daunting task of identifying the top proposals from an excellent pool of contenders. Committee chairs then coordinated the final selection. This was difficult work due to the fine array of proposals, of which 7 are chosen to present in Milan. Your paper, "*Effects of Online Audio-Book Resources on Library Usage and Reading Preferences and Practices of Young Learners in an Elementary School Library Setting in Hong Kong*", is one of them

You will be receiving more information about the format and content parameters of your presentation at the IFLA conference, as well as full paper submission guidelines.

Please reply to this message to confirm receipt.

Thank you for your professional contribution to: 75th IFLA General Conference and to strengthening libraries world-wide.

Sincerely,

Alison A. Ernst
Member, Information Literacy Standing Committee, IFLA
Director of Library & Academic Resources
Northfield Mount Hermon School
One Lamplighter Way
Mount Hermon, MA 01354 USA
Office: 01-413-498-3280
Library: 01-413-498-3030

aernst@nmhschool.org

NMH Library Home: <http://www.nmhschool.org/nmhlibrary>
NMH Library Blog: <http://nmhlibrary.typepad.com>

